
THE EFFECTS OF PRICE FRAMING AND RESTRICTIONS OF PRE-SELLING ACCOMMODATION COUPONS ON CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS

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Introduction

Service organizations are shifting toward investing more of their budget for sales promotional techniques rather than advertising because they tend to yield quicker and more measurable profits. Kindel (1993) reported that some organizations in service industries are allocating up to 75% of their budget to sales promotions, including designing and distributing coupons to the market. Normally, there are three major differences between service industries and packaged goods companies: (1) “finished” services cannot be inventoried, so unused productive capacity is perishable, (2) except for repair and maintenance, there are normally no physical distribution channels for services, and (3) there is direct personal contact with customers. Thus, service promotions are harder to implement than packaged goods promotions because it is more time-consuming and expensive to communicate their existence to consumers (Lovelock & Quelch, 1983). How to choose an effective promotional technique and to operate it well are important issues for service industries.

In 1895 C.W. Post first introduced coupons to consumers by reducing one-cent off the original price of Grape Nuts cereal; however, their popularity did not increase greatly until the 1970s. In the 1960s, coupons totalled less than 5 billion in the United States, but rose to 16.4 billion (and gained widespread distribution) in 1970. The number of coupon distributions reached 90 billion by the end of 1980 (Babakus et al., 1988). In 1995, 292 billion coupons were distributed in the United States and approximately 6 billion coupons were redeemed, for a total savings of \$4 billion (NCH Promotional Services, 1996). Today, coupons remain one of the most important promotional tools used by modern consumers.

The previous literature related to coupon promotion has focused mainly on consumer package goods companies; however, coupons are also popular and effective marketing tools for service industries (Matosian, 1982; Varadarajan, 1984). Taylor

(2001) indicated that coupon promotions are, in fact, rather common in service establishments. Hoffman, Turley, and Kelley (2002) suggested that studies related to the effects of coupon design on customer perceptions of quality, value, and brand image for retail service stores should be encouraged.

In Taiwan, pre-selling accommodation coupons are commonly used by the hotel industry for promotional purposes, and customers have indicated that they have received some benefit by using this type of coupon and are willing to use them more frequently. It has been observed that an increasing number of hotels are promoting themselves by using pre-selling accommodation coupons at annual Taiwan Travel Trade shows. The accommodation coupons provided by hotels are almost identical; therefore, this research will further investigate the effects of different accommodation coupon designs on hotel consumer perceptions.

In this study, the relationships between pre-selling accommodation coupon design structures (price framing, restrictions) and customer perceptions (perceived service quality, perceived store image, perceived risk) will be studied. More specifically, the objective of this study is to examine the influences of different accommodation coupons' designs (price framing, restrictions) on three consumer perception factors (perceived service quality, perceived store image, perceived risks), and to provide appropriate suggestions to service industry for how to design an effective promotional tool.

Literature Review And Hypotheses

Pre-sold accommodation coupons have been identified as popular sales promotion tools and have been widely used in the tourism market in Taiwan. Normally, most hotel corporations have designed their coupons similarly, except for price framing. In addition, most coupons include time-related restrictions. None of the research in Taiwan's context has focused on investigating the relationships among coupons' price framing and restrictions and customer perceptions for the accommodation industry. The following sections review research related to coupon influences on consumer behaviour, especially with regard to perceived service quality, perceived company image, and perceived risks.

Many marketers in service industries frequently use coupons to influence consumer behaviour and to increase firm profitability (Narasimhan, 1984; Peattie & Peattie, 1995). Coupons have also been found to be an effective promotional tool in service industry firms because of their effects on influencing sales and customer counts (Matosian, 1982). Coupons, which generally offer price reductions, are one of the most widely used sales promotional tools. Past studies have also indicated that coupons provide companies with several advantages, including the ability to attract new buyers, encouraging brand switching, and stimulating increased purchases by existing users (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990; Garretson & Clow, 1999). When consumers face both financial and performance risks in purchasing unfamiliar products, coupons can influence consumer behaviour by lessening those risks (Belch & Belch, 1990).

Coupons may also affect consumer attention and awareness when firms place coupons in advertisements. Indeed, even the consumers who do not redeem the coupons still process much of the information contained in the coupons with the advertisements (Shimp & Kavas, 1984). Thus, by offering coupons, a company may generate additional attention and awareness of its products and services to customers; this may result in future brand switching because of prior exposure to the information (Bawa & Shoemaker, 1989).

Prior research has focused on coupon face-value (Bawa & Shoemaker, 1987; Leone & Srinivasan, 1996; Cheong, 1993; Krishna & Shoemaker, 1992), coupon distribution vehicles (Neslin & Clarke, 1987), coupon distribution frequency (Gonul & Srinivasan, 1996), and coupon redemption rates (Reibstein & Traver, 1982). Most previous research has focused on the effects of a coupon's face-value when studying coupon framing. Cheong (1993), and Krishna and Shoemaker (1992) have studied the issues of coupon face-value affecting price perception, repeat purchases, and purchase quantity. Krishna and Shoemaker (1992) reported that the timing of redemptions was affected by a coupon's face-value. However, with the same coupon face-value, the study of other aspects of coupon framing, such as semantic cues regarding price information or restrictions, and whether they affect consumer perceptions, is limited. To study the "pure semantic effect" of the deal description, Das (1992) examined how consumers perceived four economically equivalent deals, which all involved a 25 percent discount. Four differing semantic cues were used to express the discount over eight different product items in the study. The results showed that differing semantic cues did affect consumer perceptions of product price, especially for low-priced products.

Another characteristic of coupon framing that varies in different coupons is that of restrictions. Usually, coupons are offered with differing restrictions, such as length of the promotion period (time-related restrictions), a limited number of coupons/promotional products per person (quantity-related restrictions), and the shop/hotel/establishment at which the coupon is applicable (place-related restrictions). Common time-related restrictions for coupons include an expiration date (offer valid up to a date) and a limited usage period. Reasons that time-related restrictions exist include limiting temporal financial liabilities (Inman & McAlister, 1994; Krishna & Zhang, 1999) and the fact that expiration dates can be used to shift a promotional offer to a particular period in order to generate more activities on the part of consumers (Inman & McAlister, 1994; Spears, 2001). Inman and McAlister (1994) presented the regret theory as a theoretical framework for purchase-accelerating effects; they indicated that consumers are trying to avoid the loss of expired coupons, thereby inducing an increase in redemption near the expiration date. Krishna and Zhang (1999) explained the factors related to the purchase-accelerating effects involve: (1) coupon duration will vary across firms; (2) longer coupon duration for one brand will increase redemption for coupons of that brand and of a competing brand; and (3) coupon use will affect coupon profitability. Time pressure will influence consumer's purchase

behaviours (Iyer, 1989), thus promotions often call attention to offer expiration using both explicit and implicit deadlines in advertisements (Spears, 2001). Restrictions placed on coupons, such as “least/most number of coupons per customer,” a “limited number of items per coupon,” and “only valid at a specific shop or store” are also commonly found in sales promotion offers. Quantity-related coupon restrictions are more effective when customers are deal-prone types, purchase small/large quantities, have a high elasticity of demand, and when loyal customers are few. Place-related coupon restrictions are more effective when firms try to promote a chain shop/store. However, not enough studies provide evidence showing the influence of coupon restrictions on consumer reactions.

Monroe (1973) examined the relationship between price and quality, and found that perceived quality varied by price. If consumers cannot obtain sufficient information about the product, a product with a higher price is generally considered to have higher quality. However, when other information about a product is available, the relationship between price and quality may not be so significant. Past studies in price-quality relationship have indicated that a lower price does signal inferior quality to customers (Rao & Monroe, 1989). Monroe (1990) suggested that a higher perceived price is accompanied with a higher perceived quality. However, Clow et al. (1996) noted that increasing the face-value of a coupon reduces perceived service quality; it also increases perceived performance risk through an anticipated lower service quality expectation. Munger and Grewal (2001) suggested that different ways of framing the discount will cause an impact even when the total amount of the discount is the same. Furthermore, even when the total amount of a discount remains constant, the format of the promotional discount can influence a variety of perceptions related to the attractiveness of the promotion. Munger and Grewal (2001) provide a framework for the influence of promotion on price acceptability, quality, value, and purchasing intent, and have mentioned that the promotional frames will affect the perceived quality. Based on the above literature reviews, the following hypotheses for the present study are proposed:

H1a: Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers’ perceived service quality.

H1b: Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers’ perceived service quality.

Blattberg and Neslin (1990) observed that, “For years, advertising executives have been warning marketing executives that promotion will destroy their brand’s image.” Many researchers have begun to consider the long-term effects of price promotions on brand image (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990). Using sales promotions involving temporary price decreases may create or strengthen a “discount” association with a brand, with implications for customer’s loyalty and responses to future price changes or non-price oriented marketing communication efforts. Because short-term price promotion decisions can influence a brand’s long-term future image, it is important that researchers and managers understand what those effects might be and the process

by which such effects occur. Consumer's perceptions of price promotions have been linked empirically to a brand's price image (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990), thus price promotions may have both positive and negative effects. From the consumer's perspective, a price promotion may generate a pleasant surprise: a purchase price that is lower than the price expected and, ultimately, increased the price value for the consumer. If the consumer processes this information, and attributes the satisfaction to the brand, the consumer's image of the brand will be more positive. However, if the value of the price promotion does not exceed the cost of obtaining the price deal, or if the price promotion is not lower than the consumer's internal reference price, the consumer will experience dissatisfaction. If the consumer processes this information and attributes the dissatisfaction to the brand, the brand image will be damaged (Keller, 1993). The aforementioned theories generate the second hypotheses of the present study:

H2a: Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customer perceptions of the establishment/hotel image.

H2b: Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customer perceptions of the establishment/hotel image.

Previous research suggests that a new product's price and the way to advertise the information will affect consumer's perceptions on the performance risk of the new product (Shimp & Bearden, 1982). Perceived performance risk refers to the possibility that the product will not function as expected and/or will not provide the desired benefit. Peterson and Wilson (1985) found that a relatively high price will reduce consumer's perception of performance risk, but other research did not support this claim (Shimp & Baearden, 1982). Consumer perceptions of the framed message associated with products used may be a reason for these conflicting findings.

Perceived financial risk is another important type of risk perception examined in the context of consumer decisions to adopt new products. Financial risk is defined as the likelihood of suffering a financial loss due to hidden costs, maintenance costs, or lack of warranty in the case of faults. To investigate the design of accommodation coupons and whether they will influence customer's perceptions of risks, further hypotheses were proposed:

H3a: Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived performance risk.

H3b: Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived performance risk.

H4a: Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived financial risk.

H4b: Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived financial risk.

Research Design And Methodology

Conceptual Model

This study investigated the relationships among price framing and restrictions of accommodation coupons and customer perceptions. The following conceptual model was developed (Fig. 1).

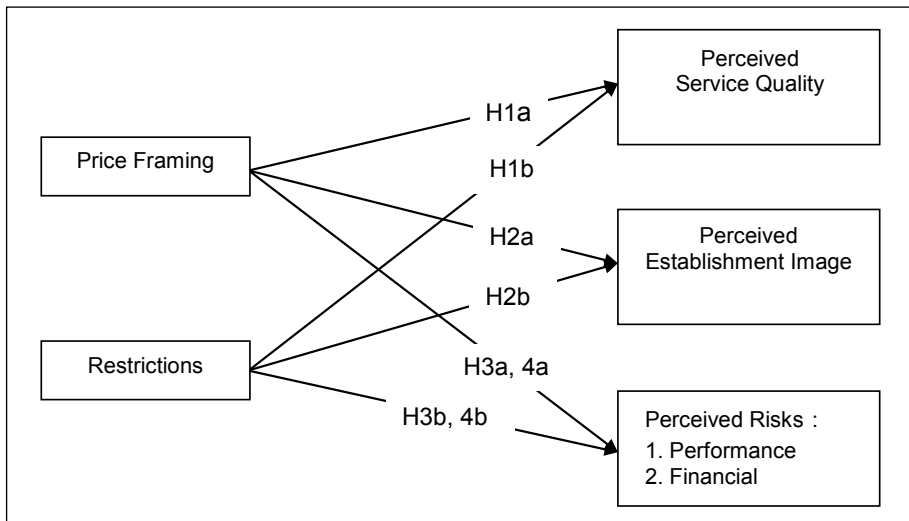


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Present Research

A two (price framing) × two (restrictions) matrix between-subjects experimental design was implemented (Table 1). The sample subjects should be highly homogeneous so as to prevent the experimental variables and to avoid heterogeneity’s influence on validity (Calder et al., 1981). Therefore, a total of 180 sample subjects were recruited from a public vocational university in southern Taiwan and were assigned randomly to one of the four treatments (six design structures).

Table 1 : Experimental Treatments

		Price Framing (Discount Semantic Cues)	
		(1) % off	(2) Regular% ____, Sale \$ __
Restrictions	No Restriction	Cell 1	Cell 2
	Time-related Restriction	Cell 3 (expiration date and unable to use during several periods)	Cell 4 (expiration date and unable to use during several periods)

Procedure

The subjects were undergraduate students at the public university. Before issuing the questionnaire, respondents were told what they should pay attention to, but the main purpose of the research was not announced, so as to prevent any bias in responses.

The subjects were asked to imagine that they had future travel plans and needed to search for hotel coupons to save money. Coupons of six design structures were created. The subjects had no prior exposure to the coupons. Each coupon contained identical information except for the restrictions and the discount semantic cues. After reading the coupon carefully, the subjects were asked to rate the items featured in the coupon using the following dimensions: perceived service quality, perceived corporate image, perceived performance risk, and perceived financial risk.

The criteria for designing the semantic cues are based on the following two principles: (1) semantic cues appear to provide information about the consistency or distinctiveness of the offering price, and (2) such cues are commonly used in the hospitality industry. Based on the above criteria, two sets of semantic cues were designed. They were (1) % off, and (2) Regular%_____, Sale \$_____ (regular vs. sale price). From a pre-survey, the average original price of a 3-star hotel was NT\$ 3,000/room/night (about US\$100/room/night); the face-value of the accommodation coupon was set at 20 percent off the original price.

Two common restrictions of accommodation coupons were selected and designed for this study: (1) no restriction, (2) time-related restrictions (with an expiration date and unable to use during several periods restriction). These restrictions were displayed on the simulated coupons according to the experimental design.

Measurement

The customers' perceptions of service quality, image, and performance/financial risks toward the hotel are all meant to be measured the effectiveness of design the coupons. In order to measure perceived service quality toward various design of accommodation coupons, three modified questions which are related to service quality perception (Grönross, 1990), accommodation image perception (Grewal et al., 1998), performance risk perception and financial risk perception (Shimp & Bearden, 1982) were measured by using a five-point scale anchored by 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. In addition, two open-ended questions were used to ensure that the subjects had understood the experimental manipulation. Questionnaires with incorrect answers for the manipulation checking questions would be eliminated. "How much is the pre-selling accommodation coupon after the discount?" was the first manipulation question and it was used to test whether the sample subjects had noticed the semantic cues of price framing. "Is there any restriction on the pre-selling accommodation coupon and, if so, what is it?" was the second manipulation checking question and it was used to assess whether the sample subjects had noticed the restriction.

Data Analysis

After receiving the questionnaires, unusable questionnaires were eliminated. The unusable responses were identified by the following two categories: (a) missing answers to three or more questions, and (b) an obvious lack of respondent consideration, such as all the answers for all the questions were the same. Cronbach's coefficient was used to test the reliability of the measurements. Cronbach's α is commonly used as a measurement of the internal consistency/reliability of a psychometric instrument. A 2x2 matrix between-subjects ANOVA was used to analyze the data collected from the experiment for testing hypotheses 1 to 4.

Results And Discussion

After receiving the questionnaires, unusable ones were eliminated. In total, 180 questionnaires were distributed; 176 usable questionnaires were returned (average response rate is 97.8%). The high return rate was believed due to the experimental method used.

Validity Analysis

Content validity is assessed by systematic, subjective evaluation of the comprehensiveness of the measuring instrument for the task at hand (Tull & Hawkins, 1990). There are two major approaches to determining content validity. First, the researcher may determine the items through a careful definition of the topic of concern. The second is to use a pilot sample of respondents to judge how well the instrument meets the standards. In this research, these two approaches were combined in order to provide good validity. All our variables therefore were not only chosen from the literature but were also judged by academic and empirical experts.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's α was used to test the reliability of the measurements (results shown in Table 2). The construct scale reliability ranged from 0.6637 (perceived service quality) to 0.7732 (perceived value). Because of the descriptive nature of this research, a reliability coefficient > 0.60 for measurements schema is considered acceptable and the construct was retained for the following statistical analyses (Robinson et al., 1991).

Table 2 : Reliability Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's α
Customers' Perceived Service Quality	0.6637
Customers' Perceived Hotel/Establishment Image	0.7042
Customers' Perceived Performance Risk	0.6874
Customers' Perceived Financial Risk	0.7211
Customers' Perceived Value	0.7732

Perceived Service Quality

A two-way ANOVA was used to test Hypotheses 1a and 1b. The result of the ANOVA indicated that there was no interaction effect (Fig. 2; $p > 0.05$) between the two factors (price framing and restriction) on customers' perceived service quality, and the price framing and restrictions on coupons did significantly affect ($p < 0.05$) the customers' perceived service quality (supporting H1a and 1b).

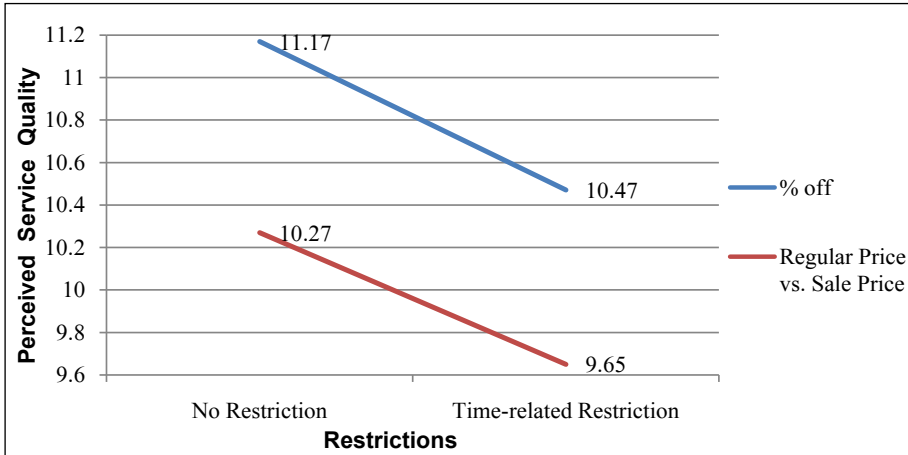


Figure 2 : Interaction Effect of Price Framing and Restriction on Customers' Perceived Service Quality

The follow-up analysis indicated that the subjects had higher service quality perceptions when the price framing of the coupon was displayed as “% off” instead of showing as “Regular Price vs. Sale Price” (Table 3, 10.82 vs. 9.86; $p < 0.05$). Perceived service quality has been defined as “the customer’s judgment about a product’s overall experience or superiority” (Zeithaml, 1988). While purchasing pre-selling accommodation coupons, the customers had not yet had an opportunity to judge the products; thus, they may judge the service quality based on their perceptions of product superiority. The customers may feel a higher level of superiority when they perceive more saving versus less saving. In 1998, Chen et al., found that the consumers indicated that a price reduction framed in dollar terms seemed more significant than the same price reduction framed in percentage terms for high-price products, and the opposite was true for low-price products. If the results of the present study are consistent with the study of Chen et al., this suggests that an expense of NT\$ 3,000 (about US\$100) may be considered a low expenditure for the customers. However, price discounts are likely to have a negative influence on customers' perceptions of quality (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990). If the results of the present study agree with the findings of Blattberg and Neslin, the expense of NT\$ 3,000 (about US\$100) may be considered a high expenditure for the customers. Regardless of price framing, restrictions on coupons caused the customers to have lower (Table 3, 10.06 vs. 10.72; $p < 0.05$) perceived service quality than those without restrictions. Restrictions on

coupons may cause customers to perceive disadvantages and reduced superiority when using the services in the future.

Table 3. Perceived Service Quality: Mean Scores by Experimental

Restrictions			
Price Framing	No Restriction	Time-related Restriction	
% off	11.17	10.47	10.82 (0.12) ^A
Regular Price vs. Sale Price	10.27	9.65	9.86 (0.12) ^B
	10.72 (0.14) ^a	10.06 (0.10) ^b	

Standard deviations are provided in parentheses.

^{A,B} Means within a column not followed by same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

^{a,b} Means within a row not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

Hypotheses 2a and 2b were tested by using ANOVA. As shown in Figure 3, the price framing and restriction interaction effect was significant ($F = 9.83$; $p < 0.05$). Contrast effects showed that the price framing of a coupon had a significant effect on customer perceptions of hotel/establishment image when the coupon had a time-related restriction.

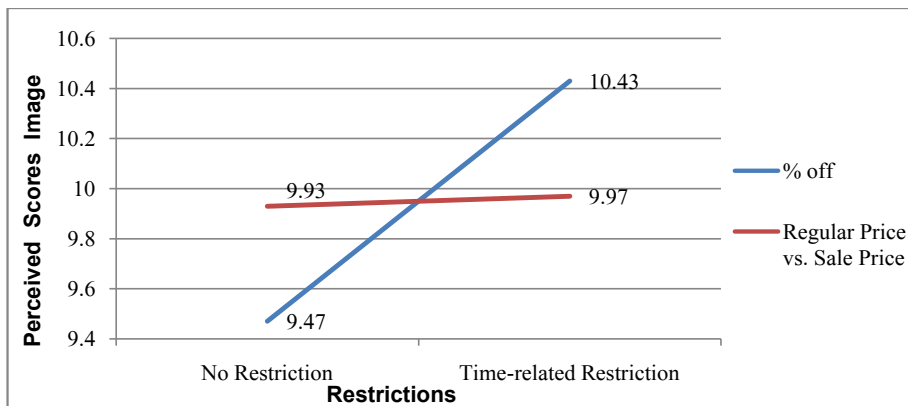


Figure 3 : Interaction Effect of Price Framing and Restriction on Customer Perceived Hotel Image

Customers also had a higher perceived score for hotel image when the discount of the coupon was shown as “% off” instead of “regular price vs. sale price” ($X_{\text{off/time-related restriction}} = 10.43$ vs. $X_{\text{regular price vs. sale price/time-related restriction}} = 9.97$; $p < 0.05$; Table 4). Above result supports Hypothesis 2a. A Hotel/establishment image is an overall impression of a particular hotel/establishment, as perceived by customers (Keaveney & Hunt, 1992). While the customers considered the expense of NT\$ 3,000 as a

low expenditure, the discount of pre-selling accommodation coupons displayed in percentage terms causes them to have stronger perceptions about price reduction than when the discount is displayed in dollar terms. The customers would have better impressions of a hotel when the discount made them think they save more money when the coupon had a time-related restriction. In contrast, if NT\$ 3,000 price was considered as a large expenditure for the customers, the discount of a product represented in dollar terms caused them to think that the product was cheaper than the discount was represented as a percentage term.

The testing “product” in the present study was a hotel; customers linked low-price hotels with poor functional qualities and psychological attributes. On the other hand, restrictions on a coupon had a significant effect on customer perceptions of hotel image when the discount on the accommodation coupon was represented as “% off”; the customers also had higher perceived hotel image scores when a coupon had a time-related restriction than with no restriction ($X_{\text{time-related restriction}/\% \text{ off}} = 10.43$ vs. $X_{\text{no restriction}/\% \text{ off}} = 9.47$; $p < 0.05$; Table 4). Above result supports Hypotheses 2b. Restrictions caused customers to have perceptions of inconvenience; however, time-related restrictions also led customers to think the hotel was trying to control the quality of the accommodation by limiting the number of guests.

Table 4 : Perceived Hotel Image Mean Scores by Experimental Conditions Perceived Performance Risk

Price Framing	Restriction	
	No Restriction	Time-related Restriction
% off	9.47 (1.07)Aa	10.43 (0.93)Ab
Regular Price vs. Sale Price	9.93 (0.83)Aa	9.97 (0.94)Ba

Standard deviations are provided in parentheses.

^{A-B} Means within a column not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

^{a-b} Means within a row not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

Perceived Performance Risk

As shown in Figure 4, the results indicated that the factors of price framing and restriction showed a significant interaction effect on customers perceptions of performance risk ($F = 14.19$; $p < 0.05$). Findings of the follow-up analysis indicated that a coupon with restrictions influenced customer perceptions of performance risk when the discount of the coupon was presented both as “% off” ($X_{\text{time-related restriction}/\% \text{ off}} = 9.83$ vs. $X_{\text{no restriction}/\% \text{ off}} = 8.10$; $p < 0.05$; Table 5) and “regular price vs. sale price” ($X_{\text{no restriction/regular price vs. sale price}} = 10.70$ vs. $X_{\text{time related restriction/regular price vs. sale price}} = 9.97$; $p < 0.05$; Table 5), which supports the Hypothesis 3b. In Table 5, the results also show that price framing in accommodation coupons had a significant effect on customer perceptions of performance risk when comparing with a coupon with no restriction

($X_{\text{regular price vs. sale price /no restriction}} = 10.70$ vs. $X_{\% \text{ off/no restriction}} = 8.10$; $p < 0.05$), and but was not significant when the coupon had a time-related restriction ($X_{\text{regular price vs. sale price/time-related restriction}} = 9.77$ vs. $X_{\% \text{ off/ time-related restriction}} = 9.83$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, Hypothesis 3a was also confirmed.

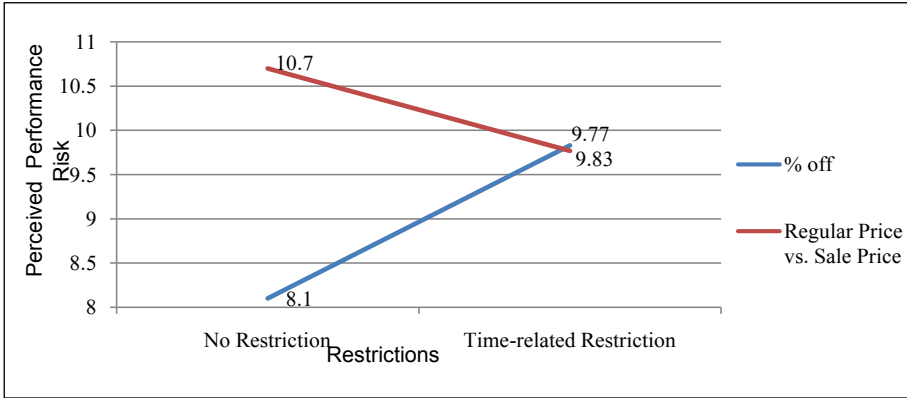


Figure 4 : Interaction Effect of Price Framing and Restrictions on Customer Perceived Performance Risk

Based on the definition of Dowling and Staelin (1994), perceived risk is the consumer’s perception of uncertainty and concomitant adverse consequences of buying a product or service. The customer’s perceived performance risk is the customer’s perceptions of the chances of the item failing to meet the performance requirements originally intended of the purchase. If customers perceive the price of the room rate to be too cheap (good discount) and with no restriction, this may cause customers to have higher uncertainty (doubt) about buying the product or service (% off case). However, a coupon having a usage period limitation/due date may cause many customers to redeem their coupons at about the same time, and it could lead customers to perceive a chance of the product failing to meet performance requirements (regular price vs. sale price case).

Table 5. Perceived Performance Risk Mean Scores by Experimental Conditions

Restriction		
Price Framing	No Restriction	Time-related Restriction
% off	8.10 (0.90)Bb	9.83 (1.12)Aa
Regular Price vs. Sale Price	10.70 (0.88)Aa	9.77 (0.92) Ab

Standard deviations are provided in parentheses.

^{A-B} Means within a column not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

^{a-b} Means within a row not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

Perceived Financial Risk

The result of ANOVA indicated that there was no interaction effect ($p > 0.05$) between the two factors (price framing and restriction) on customers’ perceived financial risk (Fig. 5), and restrictions on the pre-selling accommodation coupon did significantly ($p < 0.05$) affect customers’ perceived financial risk, but the price framing of the coupon did not (Table 6). Thus, Hypothesis 4b was supported. The following analyses indicated that customers had higher financial risk concerns when the accommodation coupon had time-related restrictions than with no restriction (11.11 vs. 9.13; $p < 0.05$; Table 6).

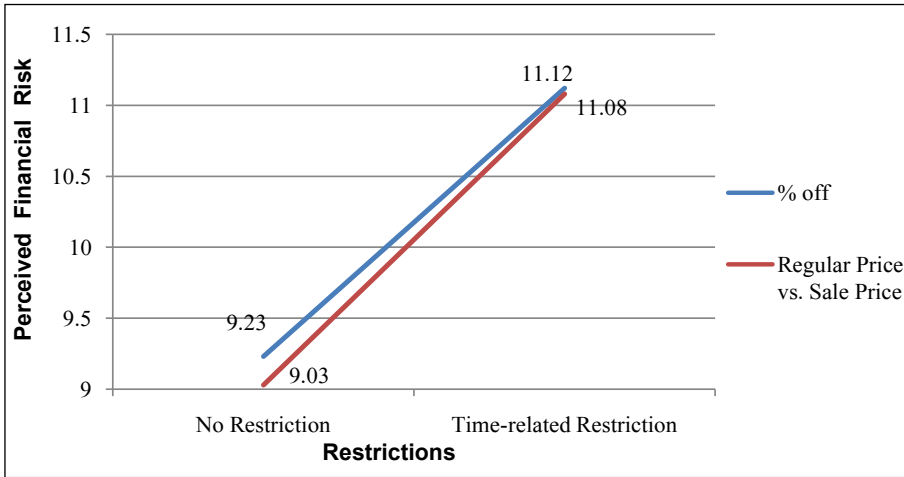


Figure 5. Interaction Effect of Price Framing and Restriction on Customers’ Perceived Financial Risk

The perceived financial risk is the perception of the likelihood of suffering a financial loss due to hidden costs. The customers perceived a higher financial risk when the coupon had a time restriction versus when it did not. Specifically, customers

Table 6. Perceived Financial Risk Mean Score by Experimental Condition

Price Framing	Restriction		
	No Restriction	Time-related Restriction	
% off	9.23	11.12	10.18 (0.16)
Regular Price vs. Sale Price	9.03	11.08	10.05 (0.12)
	9.13 (0.18) b	11.11 (0.13) a	

Standard deviations are provided in parentheses.

^{A-B} Means within a column not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

^{a-b} Means within a row not followed by the same letter are significantly different ($p < 0.05$).

can lose their money if they cannot redeem the coupon within the required time of the restriction.

Table 7. Summary of Hypotheses Tested

	Hypotheses	Test
H1a	Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived service quality.	Yes
H1b	Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived service quality.	Yes
H2a	Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customer perceptions of the establishment/hotel image.	Yes
H2b	Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customer perceptions of the establishment/hotel image.	Yes
H3a	Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived performance risk.	Yes
H3b	Restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived performance risk.	Yes
H4a	Price framing of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived financial risk.	No
H4b	Restrictions of pre-selling accommodation coupons will influence customers' perceived financial risk.	Yes

Summary of the Hypotheses Tested

Table 7 summarizes the testing results of the hypotheses; seven were supported by the results of the present study and one was not.

Conclusions, Implications, and Research Limitations

Based on the results of the present study, price framing and restrictions on pre-selling accommodation coupons influenced customer perceptions (service quality, hotel/establishment image, risks). Those perceptions would be expected to affect consumer behaviours, such as purchasing intention, satisfaction, and loyalty. The results also indicated that the price framing and restrictions on pre-selling coupons influenced customer perceptions in different ways under different conditions.

Time-related restriction on coupons caused customers to have low perceptions of service quality, regardless of price framing. Under the discount of a coupon displayed as a "% off" condition, customers had higher hotel image perceptions than with a coupon with no restriction. Customers perceived performance risk in opposite ways when the discount of the coupon was displayed with different framing. Customers perceived higher financial risk when a coupon had a due date/usage-limited period. From a managerial standpoint, the design of accommodation pre-selling coupons influenced customer perceptions.

These results should encourage accommodation marketers/on-site sellers using different marketing strategies and selling skills when they trying to sell coupons with differing restrictions. For example, the coupon seller must make efforts to comfort customers about financial risks when their coupons have time-related restrictions. The linear regression results showed a positive relationship only between customer perceived hotel/establishment image and perceived value. This result suggests that marketers/on-site sellers of pre-selling coupons could further emphasize their hotel/brand image rather than service quality to potential customers.

Although this study has provided ideas for understanding customer responses to varying designs of pre-selling accommodation coupons, it does have some limitations. First, the use of a convenience (student) sample may be seen as a limitation of this study in terms of the external validity of the findings as well as the validity of individual differences in price consciousness, one of the factors under consideration. Future research should be conducted testing other samples. Coupon “prone-ness” as a control variable (moderator) was not considered in this study. In a further study, another experiment could be set up to test whether coupon prone-ness has an effect in relation to design of coupon and customer perceptions. Examination of the design of coupons of other types of service and stores, such as retail stores, restaurants, or salons, would provide a fuller picture of the manner in which the design of coupons influences customer behaviours across service industries.

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