

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

ZoeDel E. Frisbie for the degree of Master of Science in Apparel , Interiors, Housing, and Merchandising presented on April 27, 2000. Title: Marketing Strategies of Home-Based Custom Clothiers Who Were Members of the Professional Associaton of Custom Clothiers, Oregon Chapter.

Abstract Approved: Redacted for Privacy

Nancy O. Bryant

The purpose of this study was to investigate the marketing strategies of custom clothing home-based business owners by identifying selected demographic characteristics, general business information, marketing strategies, and current and potential future marketing support from members who were custom clothier home-based business owners affiliated with the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers in the Oregon Chapter. The PACC is an organization developed to assist custom clothier home-based businesses and commercial businesses that are in fields associated with the sewing industry.

There is limited research developed exploring areas focused on the marketing of custom clothier home-based businesses. The custom clothier home-based business owner acts as the research and development manager, production manager, and accountant as well as the marketer of the business. Therefore, as concluded in previous studies the examination of the marketing strategies used by custom clothiers and any marketing support offered by professional organizations that assist home-based businesses, required further investigation.

A self-administered mail survey questionnaire was mailed to all members of the PACC organization in order to collect data for this study. Only members who owned a custom clothier home-based business were asked to participate. The data from 45 of the returned questionnaires were identified as useable and analyzed using a Statistical Analysis System (SAS) version 7.

Percents and frequencies were used to analyze the demographic characteristics, marketing strategies, and current and potential future marketing support from the PACC organization. Eighty percent of the respondents had been members of the PACC organization for three years or more. The greatest percentage of the respondents (13.33%) had owned their custom clothier business for 12 years. The majority of the respondents contribute fifty percent or less of the total household income. The respondents

in the survey confirmed that word-of-mouth communication was the most effective method of promotion for the custom clothier home-based business owner. Networking was the most beneficial item of marketing support the respondents derive from membership in the PACC organization. A Likert Scale with the endpoints of “Very Beneficial and Not Very Beneficial” identified that the respondents also perceive product/service development at meetings as a very beneficial source of marketing support from the PACC organization. Future ideas for possible potential marketing support for the PACC organization included: 1) using the PACC referral service, 2) more publicity for the PACC organization, and 3) more exposure at the national level.

Fisher’s Exact Test was used to analyze data. Four separate two-by-two tables were developed to compare the respondents as two groups of 1) those respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to 2) those respondents who did not have marketing experience and/or education. Therefore, the column factor in the columns of the two-by-two tables was marketing experience and/or education and was indicated by the respondents on the questionnaire with a “yes” or “no” response. The row factors in each of the four separate two-by-two tables were: 1) geographic range of the clientele, 2) number of competitors in the local area, 3) requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings, and 4) satisfaction with the level of profits from the business.

This investigation revealed that the proportion of the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education were inclined to have clientele outside the designated local area of a 50-mile radius within the location of the home-based business. The two-by-two table that compared the column factor of marketing experience and/or education and the row factor of satisfaction with the level of profits from the business revealed no significant differences between the two groups of respondents. Satisfaction of the business was not associated with either having marketing experience and/or education or not having marketing experience and/or education.

Research investigating the marketing strategies of custom clothier home-based business owner is an important topic. The marketing of the custom clothier home-based business is often a complex process and is difficult to master and implement.

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**Marketing Strategies of Home-Based Custom Clothiers  
Who Were Members of the  
Professional Association of Custom Clothiers, Oregon Chapter**

by

**ZoeDel E. Frisbie**

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Dean of Graduate School

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ZoeDel E. Frisbie

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While reviewing this study, consider the following excerpt describing the custom clothier's role:

*The human form stubbornly defies description as a shape; it is not easily defined as a cylinder or a cube because of the infinite variations in its planes and curves. This is especially true of the female body. The necessity of this form to move adds another dimension to designing clothing for it. A good custom dressmaker takes endless variables into account to design a garment with a fit that is impossible to imitate with mass-produced methods (Maslowski, 1995, p.10).*

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# MARKETING STRATEGIES OF HOME-BASED CUSTOM CLOTHIERS WHO WERE MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CUSTOM CLOTHIERS, OREGON CHAPTER

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s there have been an increasing number of people who have started home-based businesses. According to Friedman (1997) there were an estimated 12 million home-based businesses in the United States in 1991 and this number rose to 16 million in 1996. A variety of reasons have been given for the rise in the number of home-based businesses. These include: low start-up costs, downsizing in businesses, early retirement from another job, underemployment, and family considerations (Duggan, 1988; Muschamp, 1997).

The home-based business sector involves various forms of business functions including mail order, consulting, accounting, real estate, graphic arts, interior decorating, custom clothing, insurance, advertising, home remodeling, day care, bed-and-breakfast lodgings, and product sales (Davidson, 1990). Other terms that might be used to refer to home-based businesses are underground economy, cottage industry, homework, working at home, and workstead. Various businesses that have grown to become large organizations started in the home including Hewlett-Packard, Nike, Hershey Foods Corp., Baskin and Robbins Ice Cream, and Apple Computer. The previous examples demonstrate that some home-based businesses outgrow their home spaces and evolve into large corporations (Atkinson, 1985).

The start-up and maintenance of business functions the home-based business owner is faced with is not an easy task and involve the "wearing of many hats". The home-based business owner has the responsibilities of the research and development manager, production manager, marketing manager, and accountant. According to Daley (1997) one of the most frequent reasons that home-based businesses do not succeed was due to ineffective or non-existent marketing strategies rather than the quality of the product or service offered. This was consistent with the findings of a study completed by Bastow-Shoop (1990) regarding home-based businesses. Bastow-Shoop found that most people cite marketing as an area requiring more information to assist them in running their businesses.

The responsibility of the marketing of the home-based business is based on the business owner's marketing experience and/or education. Numerous states have trained U.S. Agricultural Experimental

Station extension personnel and established courses in small business practice at the community colleges to assist with setting up a business and to help identify new products or markets for the small business owner. Besides assistance from extension personnel, the custom clothier home-based business owner might seek the assistance of an organization that specializes in the support of custom clothier home-based businesses.

### Home-Based Businesses

Home-based businesses and home-based work are classified in two separate categories. Atkinson (1985) defined the two areas of the work-at-home force as those that are a) self-employed and run their own home-based businesses and b) those who are employed by someone else and do some or all of their employer-related work as home-based work. The performance of a home-based business takes place and is located in the primary residence of the owner. The location of the business may take place in an area of the owner's residence, in an attached building, or in a separate building on the property of the residence owner.

In Bastow-Shoop's (1990) study of home-based businesses almost half the respondents decided to start their businesses because their hobby had become profitable. Although a hobby can sometimes account for the beginnings of a home-based business it differs from owning a business. A person involved in a hobby does not have the responsibility of maintaining a professional attitude regarding specified work schedules, completion dates for finishing projects, marketing the products, and setting competitive prices for their products and/or services (Miller, 1986).

### Importance of Home-Based Businesses

#### Family Considerations

It would seem that for some parents managing a business out of the home would be the perfect alternative to being employed outside the home. It would provide the opportunity to watch the children while at work, however this may not always be easy to manage. As Jaffe (1997) stated:

Working from home might appear to be an idyllic alternative to office work, but the reality can be quite different. The clashes between work and family become more immediate, and there are everyday challenges in trying to maintain a polished and professional work environment when the kids are screaming, the dog is barking, and the neighbor's lawn mower is roaring (p. 57).

The person considering working from home needs to recognize that it might not be any different from working outside the home. The home-based business owner requires the same levels of dedication and effort, however the distractions are different. If the home-based business owner is the homemaker of the family, she/he may find herself/himself having to abandon her/his job in order to run errands, do housework, prepare meals, and fill an assortment of other requests (Atkinson, 1985).

### Economic Considerations

Home-based businesses are not new to the U.S. economy. According to Daley (1997) the first half of this century, 1900-1950, saw home-based businesses prosper. Many stores and shops in cities were built on the front of residential dwellings of owners before regulatory infrastructures such as planning and zoning commissions were developed. Managing a business from the home can be an excellent way to save on the expense of renting or leasing a space elsewhere. The home-based business owner does not have to spend time on the road driving to and from work each day. Owners can set their own hours and work at the times they are the most productive. During the 1980's farm families turned to studying the profitability of home-based businesses as a means to supplement their income during the farm crisis. In 1980 family and consumer science extension specialists and county extension agents particularly noticed a rising interest in the area of sewing for pay. Handouts, slides and other visual aids were prepared to aid these people and the "Sewing For Pay" national program was developed. The program was based on two seminars that were "The Business of Sewing" and "Putting It Altogether" (Brannon, 1983).

### Research Focus

The focus of this study is on marketing strategies of home-based custom clothiers. The members of the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC) served as the selected population for the research. The Professional Association of Custom Clothiers was formed in 1984 in Portland, Oregon. The local chapter in Oregon includes 82 members and the national membership includes 750 members (McInerney, 1998).. The Professional Association of Custom Clothiers is a non-profit national organization developed to meet the needs of home-based and commercial businesses. The organization functions through a national office and local state chapters. The monthly meetings inform members of

developments in business and the sewing and textile industries. The organization assists in promoting the use of custom services by the general public.

#### Justification of the Study

The studies completed about custom clothier home-based businesses have concentrated on utilitarian versus creative artistic ability of the sewers, personality traits of the owners who are still in business, and consumers of custom sewing businesses (Braucht, 1985; Duncan, 1991). Studies that focus on the area of marketing strategies or marketing support of custom clothier home-based businesses are limited. This is a salient topic for research as it is an important and necessary part of the success of the home-based business and marketing strategies are often difficult for owners to master and implement.

Marketing strategies differ in terminology and methods used when comparing strategies of the small business owner to those of the large business owner. In a study of textile related home-based business owners Duggan (1988) found that the majority of the respondents relied on self-study books or real life experiences to obtain their marketing skills. After analyzing the importance of marketing to the textile-related products home-based business owners, Duggan (1988) concluded that the related issue of pricing and new product development might require further investigation as they are complicated areas of marketing for the small business owner. Duggan (1988) also recommended the participants in her textile-related home-based business study might benefit from the promotion of membership in an organization that specialized in assisting custom clothiers as a means of networking. She came to this conclusion after determining that the most important method of promotion used by her respondents was word-of-mouth communication.

Membership in an organization devoted primarily to home-based custom clothing products and/or services was further suggested through the analysis of the distinctions between small business owners or home-based business owners and large business executives. The differences suggest that small business owners may need assistance from some kind of support organization to help with business areas where they lack expertise. The large business executive has colleagues or the resources to hire a consultant for this purpose. The small business owner is dependent on locating a networking group to assist in thinking through a problem, to learn from others experiences, or to develop a broader base or business contacts and leads (Silver, 1998).

According to Duncan (1991) the identification and analysis of specific support groups developed to assist custom clothiers could be examined for the kind of assistance they offer. Her study consisted of custom clothier home-based business owners who were currently in business and custom clothiers who had closed their businesses in Mississippi.

### Purpose and Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to identify the marketing practices currently used by Oregon members of PACC custom clothier home-based business owners. The objectives of this study were:

1. To describe selected demographic characteristics of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC.
2. To identify marketing strategies of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC in terms of:
  - (a) ascertaining the perceived needs of the custom clothier's clientele
  - (b) identifying the most effective selling points
  - (c) setting a marketable price for products/services
  - (d) identifying the most effective methods of promotion
  - (e) identifying the geographic range of clientele
  - (f) ascertaining the main sources of useful new product information
3. To identify current marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.
4. To identify potential future marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.
5. To compare the marketing strategies of members who had marketing experience and/or education to those members who had not had marketing experience and/or education in terms of:
  - (a) The members whose clientele is within a 50 mile radius of their home to those whose clientele is outside the 50 mile radius of their home.
  - (b) The custom clothier who has between 0 to 1, 2 to 3, and 4 or more competitors within a 50 mile radius of their home.
  - (c) The custom clothier whose clientele requests new fabrics, embellishments, or



interfacings to the custom clothier whose clientele does not request new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.

- (d) The custom clothier who is satisfied with their level of profits from the business to the custom clothier who is not satisfied with the level of profits from the business.

#### Definitions:

The following definitions are essential in understanding the terms used in this thesis. Researchers may use the same word but have a slightly different meaning in mind when using it. To be absolutely clear in which way these terms are used in the present thesis, working definitions for terms used in this thesis follow:

**Custom clothing products/services** refers to fee-for-product/service tasks related to apparel construction and maintenance as performed by small, privately owned business establishments. Custom clothiers customize their products/services by fitting and producing made-to-measure garments or altering ready-to-wear garments to an individual's specifications.

**Home-based business** refers to a business located in the primary residence of the owner, in an attached building to the primary residence of the owner, or in a separate building on the same property designated as the personal residence of the owner.

The term **client** or **clientele** will be used to refer to custom clothing customers throughout the research paper. The term **client** refers to a person who considers himself/herself as a customer of a service or business to engage the professional advice or services of the business on a one-to-one basis. The term **clientele** refers to a body of persons or all of one's clients or customers collectively who attach themselves as a patron of a service or business on a one-to-one basis.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature includes the following sections: Marketing Research for the Home-Based Custom Clothier Business, Marketing Strategies for the Home-Based Custom Clothier, the Niche for Custom Clothing, the Marketing Mix for Custom Clothing, New Product/Technique Development, Positioning of Custom Clothing in the Marketplace, the Five Uncontrollable C's of Marketing, and Marketing Support from an Organization.

John Czepiel's perspective of the tasks of marketing was the framework for this study. Czepiel's tasks of marketing were described as the following:

- (1) design of an offering to meet consumer needs, (2) attraction of clients to that offering, and (3) monitoring and control of results to ensure the meeting of customer needs in a changing environment (p.3).

"Marketing is a very complex subject; it deals with all the steps between determining customer needs and supplying them at a profit" (Rice, n.d. p.2). Effective marketing is carried out through strategic planning by the business owner in concurrence with the knowledge that the marketer has about the impact the strategies may have on its customers. The custom clothier must have a good understanding of their clientele's wants and needs to effectively market to them and make a profit. This is known as the marketing concept. Brock, Cox, Stafford, and Palmer (n.d.) recommended that a small business use the following four steps to carry out the marketing concept.

- 1) Determine the needs of the customers (Market Research)
  - 2) Analyze their competitive advantages (Market Strategy)
  - 3) Select specific markets to serve (Target Market)
  - 4) Determine how to satisfy those needs (Marketing Mix)
- (p.2)

The following sections will discuss these four steps in further detail. Other areas of interest in carrying out the marketing concept include the following: new product/service technique development, positioning of the custom clothing product, the uncontrollable 5 C's of marketing, and marketing support from an organization. These topics will be discussed later in the review of literature.

### Marketing Research for the Home-Based Custom Clothier Business

Marketing research is described as a method of gathering facts and opinions about problems relating to the marketing of the products/services of the custom clothier home-based business owner.

Marketing research identifies what the marketing situation really is and not how the person carrying out the marketing would like it to be. The end result of the marketing research is determining what people want to buy and not just what the custom clothier home-based business owner wants to sell (Laumer, Harris, Guffey, Judd, Erffmeyer, n.d.). Barrett (1999) stated that marketing research is assessing the needs and wants of clientele and literally “wearing your customer’s shoes” (p.1). Barrett’s description of marketing research was to “understand what stimulates your customer to buy your particular type of product, take that information and turn it into your competitive advantage”.

Callahan and Cassar (1995) stated that small businesses generally prefer an informal method of marketing research. Informal marketing research was described as discussions with clients or family members regarding information from trade magazines or discussions with professionals such as economists or accountants associated with the business. Formal marketing research, which is generally used by large firms, is the use of data gathering techniques completed in a systematic manner (Callahan and Cassar, 1995). Although, the custom clothier home-based business owner might use some formal marketing research methods such as analyzing sales receipts and business records this type of feedback still excludes any input from clients who are not currently using their products or services.

Formal marketing research that has been completed and might be of assistance to custom clothier home-based business owners would be Duggan’s (1988) study of the marketing strategies used by textile related home-based business owners, and Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly’s (1991) study of consumers of customized sewing services. Funding and research skills are sometimes provided for the home-based custom clothier by the College of Family and Consumer Sciences and the University Extension programs (Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly (1991).

### **Marketing Strategies for the Home-Based Custom Clothier Businesses**

The marketing of the home-based custom clothing business is essential to the person managing the business whether the owner maintains the business at its current level of profit or plans to expand the output of current product/services, update current product services, or develop new product/service ideas to increase the profit of the business. If there is no marketing of the service or product of the home-based business then the chances are that no new clients will know about the business or where to acquire the

service or product. The absence of marketing strategies utilized by the business owner might be due to the lack of understanding of marketing.

Generally, marketing would be defined by most people as “selling” or “advertising” (McCarthy, 1981). However, marketing includes all business activities involved in the transition of the products/services from the custom clothier to their clientele to create a profit. On the other hand selling or advertising was described as a producer making a product and then using various methods to inform and/or persuade clientele to buy the product (Futrell, 1990).

In today’s society, marketing and the marketing concept are very complex subjects. As was stated previously the marketing concept involves determining the clients’ needs and wants and supplying them at a profit. The complexity of the marketing concept was described by Davidson (1989). Davidson (1989) stated that today’s marketplace was not as responsive to traditional marketing practices as it was in the past. Traditional marketing refers to a push strategy of mass producing products/services to attract a homogeneous group of customers, while today’s society is more pull oriented with customer’s being defined as a heterogeneous group rather than a homogeneous group and marketers find it essential to design products for specific niches rather than mass markets (Riley, 1999, Wilke, 1994).

Chun (1996) agreed with Davidson that the marketplace is highly sophisticated in today’s society and that the marketer has to look for specific categories of the market or segments. The product/service provided by the home-based custom clothier might already be specialized for a specific market or segment such as bridal wear, alterations, and tailoring (Skyes, 1992; Spike, 1990). However, as authors Barbara Skyes (1992) and Kathleen Spike (1990) stated it is important to custom clothiers to assess their market in order to meet the clientele’s wants and needs focusing on current demands for custom clothier products/services in the marketplace.

One step involved in carrying out the marketing concept is the marketing strategy. The marketing strategy involves first identifying a target market, and then creating a marketing mix of the four controllable variables called the four P’s. The target market is a homogeneous group of clients to whom the custom clothier wishes to appeal or sell his or her product. The four P’s are product, price, place, and promotion (McCarthy, 1981, Stanton, 1984). These will be discussed later in this chapter.

Stanton (1984) stated that strategic market planning required analysis of the company's existing situation including its markets, competition, products, distribution systems, and promotional programs, before setting marketing objectives. The company's existing situation for marketing and ability to supply to the clients' wants and needs are important factors to consider when identifying the target market and creating the marketing mix. These factors will be discussed later in this chapter.

### The Target Market or Niche for Custom Clothing

The New Webster 2<sup>nd</sup> College Edition (1968) defined "niche" as a place or position particularly suitable for the person or thing in it. The "niche" market in business might be a small firm capitalizing on a small segment of a large, diverse market generally served only by the biggest companies or it might be identifying the location of a unique target market or niche to sell its products/services to. When a small business owner targets a niche, the business offers specialized goods and services to supply the wants and needs of a specific group of clients such as custom made garments (Delaney, 1995). Linneman & Stanton (1991) established that although niche markets have been typically targeted by small businesses, large businesses were currently examining methods of marketing to smaller segments or niches due to the changing interests of consumers in today's marketplace.

Niche marketing might be referred to as target marketing, market segmentation, micromarketing, or regional marketing (Linneman & Stanton, 1991). According to Linneman and Stanton (1991) there were no more mass markets, today's firms were focusing on smaller and smaller target markets. Marsha Feltinghoff agreed with the idea of smaller target markets or niches as she stated: "I like to peel away the layers of the onion and get to the core of each marketplace" (Chun, 1996, p. 140). Feltinghoff belongs to a new group of entrepreneurs who must secure their niche in marketing to be successful and keep up with the knowledgeable client. Identifying the niche market might be complicated and expensive, but the end results might be that the newly discovered market is more targeted and effective for sales (Chun, 1996; Linneman & Stanton, 1991).

Brock, Cox, Stafford, and Palmer (n.d.) of the Small Business Administration have determined that there are two major methods to segment the target market. These two methods are geographical segmentation and customer/client segmentation. They were defined as follows:

- 1) Geographical segmentation-specializing in serving the needs of customers in a particular geographical area (for example, a neighborhood convenience store may send advertisements only to people living within one-half mile of the store).
- 2) Customer segmentation-identifying and promoting to those groups of people most likely to buy the product. In other words, selling to the heavy users before trying to develop new users (p.2).

The custom clothing home-based business owner might find potential clients for his or her products/services geographically located in his or her neighborhood. Other possibilities would be to locate potential clients by geographical segmentation in another adjoining state, or on a nationwide, or international basis. Skyes (1992) stressed the importance of matching the clients' needs with the product/service the custom clothier has to offer. It is critical to research the customer/client segmentation of potential clients of the custom clothing business and to be knowledgeable about their demographic characteristics.

At one time retail department stores served a niche for custom clothing. Stores such as Berdorf Goodman maintained a custom clothing department with a staff of custom clothiers to serve the needs of its clients that was not met by the retail goods stocked in their stores. Berdorf Goodman closed its custom clothing department in 1969 due to pressure from costs of fabrics, lack of available skilled labor, and rising costs resulting from contracts with the Independent Ladies Garment Workers Union. Goodman felt there was no longer sufficient demand for a custom clothing department. The space was converted to a high fashion department (Hanesberg,1969).

The use of custom clothing services to satisfy the needs of consumers who have fitting problems with ready-to-wear was identified in Wright's (1986) study. Wright (1986) conducted a study to determine the satisfaction with career dress and consumer's willingness to trade styling variety, time, and money for more sizing options. Wright's (1986) study concluded that 3.3% of her respondents, who were typically working women between the ages of 35 to 44 years of age, frequently or always, had their garments custom sewn as an alternative to wearing poorly fitting ready-to-wear.

Braucht's (1985) study of users of custom clothing services in Madison, Wisconsin compared twenty-two products/services of specialized sewing that included both utilitarian and artistic/creative products and services. Braucht (1985) determined that utilitarian services of mending and alterations were in greater demand than the use of artistic/creative products/services. Braucht's (1985) investigation

compared the gender of consumers using utilitarian services. It revealed that five of these services were used most by male clients: shortening or lengthening hems, repairing split seams, sewing on or replacing buttons, changing placement of buttons, and simple mending.

Of the people who utilized the services of shopping for fabrics and notions and wardrobe planning and consultation, the income level was on the income scale at less than \$5000. (Note: The income quoted by the researcher was not defined as either net or gross.) After reexamining the data obtained by the questionnaire, Braucht (1985) concluded that special needs were conducive in the decision to use customized sewing services. The study showed that the respondents with incomes of less than \$5000 were generally college age students or elderly persons. The college age students may lack security in decision-making and find the consultation for wardrobe planning essential. The elderly people in the survey may not have the physical desire to make shopping decisions about their wardrobes themselves or they may not have the physical capacity to shop.

A study conducted by Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly (1991) focused on custom clothing consumers in rural and urban areas of Iowa. The researchers found that the clients or users of custom clothing had higher levels of income than nonusers. The researchers also found that the custom clothing clients had lower levels of sewing skills than nonusers. The clients or users who had less sewing skills and used custom clothing services confirmed Braucht's (1985) findings in the study from Madison, Wisconsin. Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly (1991) found that users exhibited somewhat higher concern with how clothing makes them feel and how they express themselves through their clothing. Their study also revealed that the demographic characteristics of higher income and higher education of the clients or users of custom clothing were more significant predictors in finding clients who use custom clothing services rather than their personality traits for shopping and clothing interest variables.

### The Marketing Mix for Custom Clothing

The marketing mix involves strategic planning and utilization of the Four P's in marketing: product, price, place, and promotion. The combination of these four elements was the core of the custom clothiers marketing system (Stanton, 1984).

Home-based custom clothiers were classified as either a product or service business or both (Brabec, 1986). According to Stanton (1984) and Czepiel (1980) the marketing of services was essentially

the same as marketing of products. The marketer must select a target market and develop a marketing mix guided by the four P's.

### Product/Service

Custom clothiers produce a product or a service or both. Stanton (1984) defined product as a set of tangible or intangible attributes that provide want-satisfying benefits to the buyer in an exchange. Such attributes include color, price, packaging, and the reputation and services of the custom clothier and the retailer.

A "product" might be a physical good, a service, an idea, a place, an organization, or even a person. The Small Business Administration stated the effective product strategies for small businesses might include concentrating on a narrow product line, developing a highly specialized product or service or providing a product-service package containing an unusual amount of service (Brock, Cox, Stafford, and Palmer, n.d.)

A consumer is motivated by needs and wants to buy a product. The needs result from a "lack of something desirable" and the wants are "needs learned by the person." Abraham Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs which included five levels: the first level is physiological needs, the second level is safety needs, the third level is social needs, the fourth level is ego needs, and the fifth level is self-actualization needs. Maslow determined that if the first level of the consumer's needs is satisfied then they move to the next level. If there is an unsatisfied need in any of the levels then it serves as a motivator for a consumer to begin thinking about or actually purchasing a product (Wilke, 1994). Consumers may be motivated to fulfill a need and shop at custom clothiers businesses to purchase garments that either fit them properly (a physiological need) or are of the design, color, and fabric they desire (social, ego, or self-actualization need) (Futrell, 1990). Shaeffer (1984) described the need for custom garments as the following: "unusual or difficult-to-fit figure types, one-of-a-kind designs, and individuals who want better values and who are not looking for bargains" (p.18).

Duggan's (1988) study of textile-related home-based business owners identified that the majority of the business output from the business was product oriented. The product most frequently cited by respondents as the primary aspect of the business was apparel and accessories. The second most frequently cited aspect of the business was weaving.



The greatest demand for custom sewing services in Iowa in both rural and urban areas was for mending, alterations, and some garment construction services (Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly, 1991). The researchers determined that two value-added services provided by the custom clothiers were wardrobe consultation and second opinions for clients who need reassurance of their clothing appropriateness. Duncan (1991) found that successful custom clothing owners offered services in alterations, formal/bridal, tailoring, and teaching sewing.

### Price

The price is a significant and determining factor of the marketing mix to the consumer. The price communicates the amount of expense or value of the product/service desired in a transaction with the consumer (Futrell, 1990; Wilke, 1994). Price is related to the utility and value of a product in economic theory. Utility is the attribute of an item that makes it capable of want-satisfaction. Value is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative measures in considering the product's worth in exchange for money or other products. The qualitative value of the product/service is the custom clothier's contribution of sewing skills and knowledge as perceived by the client. The value of the product/service may be expressed quantitatively in terms of dollars and cents. Price is determined in part by the amount of competition in the market. If clientele won't accept the price, all planning of the marketing mix is wasted (McCarthy, 1981).

The determination of price involves many issues including producer's costs, the structure of demand in the marketplace, and competitive factors (Wilke, 1994). Smith (1984) stated that the most difficult problem faced by custom sewers might be the issue of price whether they are experienced or inexperienced business owners. The price of the item is dependent on the location of the business, the reputation of the custom sewer, skills and speed of the custom sewer, the fabrics used for the product/service, and the competition in the area.

Smith (1984) identified that the most effective methods of pricing for custom clothing services were by item, by hourly rates, by comparing custom made with ready-to-wear, and by comparing owners' prices in a given location. The pricing formula needs to include some combination of labor and overhead cost. Duncan (1991) found that the most frequently cited response for method of charging clients was by the job/project.

### Place

The decision of place in the marketing mix refers to the manner in which a product or service is made available to clients (Wilke, 1994). It is important to have the product available to clients in a convenient and accessible location. Examples of distribution channels to the consumer might include selling directly to the consumer, selling through retailers, or selling through wholesalers (Futrell, 1990). Custom clothiers sell directly to consumers in their home-based businesses. Retail outlets available to the marketing of custom clothing were craft fairs, consignment in galleries, or holiday markets. A custom clothier's business might expand into the selling of patterns or books to be sold through wholesale channels (Brabec, 1986)

Zoning regulations are regulated locally. There might be cause for concern by neighbors in the use of the home-based business as a distribution channel for products or services. Zoning complaints seldom occur unless they cause unnecessary disruption in the neighborhood. For example, complaints might occur if the business creates a parking problem, excess traffic on the street or excess noise, or affects the appearance of the property or neighborhood. For custom clothiers zoning is seldom a problem in residential areas especially if there is no business sign in the yard and no neighborhood disruption occurs (Smith, 1984).

According to Hewes (1981) an inhibitor for marketing of the custom clothier home-based business might be location. The custom clothier's primary place for distribution of products/services is directly on the premises of the home-based business. The home-based business might not be located near commercial areas where clients typically shop. Therefore the home-based business owner would have to locate distribution channels where the target market is located or find other ways to allow accessibility to potential clients that prefer the convenience of using custom clothier products/services while carrying out other shopping tasks. The isolation or location inhibition problem faced by the home-based business owner for their distribution channel due to being located in a residential area require that the home-based business owner have to examine the four P's of the marketing strategy and determine if a distribution channel away from the home-based area would be more profitable.

Duggan's (1988) study of home-based businesses found that selling directly to the consumer and custom orders were the most important channels for the home-based textile related products business owners to use. The next most important channels were selling through a retailer and mail order.

### Promotion

Promotion is a method to inform potential clients about the three other items in the mix of product, price, and place. The promotion of the other three P's in the mix that have been established offers an opportunity for a transaction to occur. Promotion encourages potential clients to consider a purchase of the business's product and can be considered a communication link between the business and its clientele (Wilke, 1994).

Futrell (1990) described the four basic parts of promotional effort as the following:

- 1) Personal selling-the persuasion through personal communication to a prospective customer to buy a good, idea, service, that satisfies the individual's needs.
- 2) Advertising-communication which is nonpersonal and paid for by an identified sponsor such as an individual or organization. Advertising may include television, radio, direct mail, catalogs, newspapers, and outdoor advertising such as billboards.
- 3) Publicity-communication of information in a nonpersonal form which is not paid for by an individual or organization. Information appears in media such as television, radio, and newspapers.
- 4) Sales promotion-there are two types of sales promotion: consumer and trade sales promotion. Consumers sales promotion includes free samples, coupons, contests, and demonstrations to consumers. Trade sales promotion encourages wholesalers and retailers to purchase and to sell aggressively using devices such as sales contests, displays, special purchase prices, and free merchandise (p. 43).

Custom clothiers by nature of the business use personal selling on a one-to-one basis with their potential clients. Advertising might include attaching business cards to bulletin boards at community, church, retail stores, or office buildings. The custom clothier might create a poster or flyer with a pocket to hold business cards and attach this promotional tool on bulletin boards (Spike, 1990). Spike (1990) recommended that the use of the yellow pages and ads in newspapers might be effective. This form of advertising might also be expensive. Hoffman and Hunt (1993) recommended gaining publicity by sending press releases to journals and magazines with a description of the custom clothier's product or knowledge of latest techniques that aid in better quality or faster production times. The authors also recommended speaking at seminars or teaching workshops and classes to the public to gain the public's recognition of the custom clothier's work and experience. Although sales promotion might not be a widely used form of

promotion for the custom clothier home-based business owner there are times when it might be effective such as demonstrating the fitting of bridal wear to a group of potential clients.

Duggan's (1988) investigation of the marketing practices of textile related home-based business owners determined that "word-of-mouth" or personal selling was the most important promotion method used by the respondents. Similarly, Van Auken, Doran, and Rittenburg (1992) found in a survey conducted in Iowa that referrals were the most effective means of promotion during the first year small businesses were managed. They also determined that most small businesses continued to use the same form of promotion that was used during the first year of business. They felt this might be due to the small businesses not being adept in selecting appropriate advertising, affordability, or that they might be too preoccupied with the day-to-day functions to formulate promotional plans.

Service related businesses are considered to cause more potential risk to the consumer purchasing them and possibly require more information sources during the decision process used by the consumer. Clients of custom clothiers might need to obtain information before using the service including turn around time, expectations of quality, and consistency of the work (Czepiel, 1980). Other services of custom clothiers that may be of importance in deciding to use their services are their knowledge and expertise in fitting garments to a client's measurements (Maslowski, 1995).

Due to increased risk involved in the consumption of services or custom produced products consumers do rely heavily on word-of-mouth communication from friends or on the reputation of the service provider (Wilke, 1994). Research has suggested that consumers of products or services engage in positive word-of-mouth communication when satisfied with a product/service and negative word-of-mouth communication when dissatisfied (Swan & Oliver, 1989). In these two cited studies dissatisfied clients were just as likely to tell friends and relatives that they were dissatisfied with a custom clothier's product/service.

Marketers use four strategies when dealing with word-of-mouth communication and consumer networks. The four strategies were 1) discourage unfavorable word-of-mouth, 2) create favorable word-of-mouth, 3) stimulate additional direct sales through word-of-mouth, and 4) stimulate word-of-mouth advertising (Wilke, 1994). Spike (1990) recommended creating favorable word-of-mouth not only by maintaining high quality work to satisfy her clients, but also doing something special every now and then

such as not charging for repairs, hemming a garment, or giving a small handmade gift at delivery time. She stated that referrals keep her busy.

In Biggs' (1984) study of textile craftspeople, personal selling was the most important method of promotion. The reasons given by the textile craftspeople were direct involvement with clients and no commissions or fees, thus greater remuneration. The textile craftspeople preferred personal contact with their clients and no obligation for agent fees.

Marketing reach, a focus of the research by Duggan (1988) is the combination of the variety of promotional methods, distribution channels, and the geographic range of clientele of the textile-related home-based business owner that allow the textile-related home-based business owner to establish clientele beyond the boundaries of the home. Duggan (1988) determined that the respondents in her survey that had marketing training had the greatest marketing reach. Her study also concluded that the majority of the respondent's had clientele a national geographic range and some had clientele as far as international.

#### New Product Development/Techniques

New product development or diversification is essential to maintain a competitive edge in most markets. As client's needs change the business may want to develop new products/techniques or modify existing products/techniques to meet the changing clients needs and keep up with competitors' actions.

McCarthy (1981) described new product development as follows:

A new product is one that is new in any way for the company concerned. A "new product" can become "new" in many ways. A new idea can be turned into a new item or service. Small changes in an existing product also can make it "new". Or an existing product may be offered to new markets as a "new" product (p.320).

The area of new product development is essential to the growth and maintenance of profits of any business. Brabec (1986) who researched home-based businesses stated that home-based businesses could increase their income through diversification. "As I see it one of the real formulas for success in a home business is: Diversification of Business = Multiplication of Dollars" (p. 213). Ways to possibly increase profit potential in home-based custom clothing businesses might be to diversify by using direct mail as another marketing avenue or by offering consulting services, writing books or articles, and adding or changing current product/service techniques used in the business.

The custom clothier who specializes in an area of custom clothing such as skiwear might find that this is a seasonal product/service. If she/he needs to create more profit for the business it might be necessary to develop another product/service that encourages business during the slack times.

The custom clothier home-based business owner has to be aware of what her/his peers and competitors are offering to position her products/services, to diversify or to develop new product ideas. Marketing research needs to be conducted regularly by asking clients what they like, dislike and need from the business as well as going through sales records, receipts, files, and analyzing client orders and finding a method to communicate to potential future clientele. The custom clothier might need to find a distributor for a special fabric that is frequently requested by clientele, but not located in local retail outlets such as Ultrasuede<sup>®</sup>, leather, or silk.

Due to rapid changes in the fashion industry, the custom clothier is faced with the need to update or learn new product/service techniques. The custom clothier home-based business owner has to strive to increase his or her knowledge and stay abreast of changes in the profession. Not only does the custom clothier have to keep updated on changes in the fashion industry, but the people who are information sources for the custom clothier home-based business owner have to keep abreast of changes. An example would be the updating of Claire Shaeffer's book, The Fabric Sewing Guide, from its 1989 edition to its 1994 edition. Sections were added about new fabrics such as microfibers, vinyl laminates, and Polar Fleece. New charts were included for the newly developed interfacings, new types of needles, new threads, and updated troubleshooting ideas that have been identified recently in the sewing and textiles industry (Shaeffer, 1994). Sources for new/product information include semimonthly or monthly magazines such as Threads, Sew News, books, video tapes, pattern catalogs, pamphlets, networking, professional organizations, and regional and national expositions such as the Washington State's "Sewing Expo". Seminars on consumer education and trade for the sewing industry are offered in addition to a number of other topics.

### Positioning of Custom Clothing in the Marketplace

Selling points, also called positioning, in marketing refers to the design of a marketing mix that will lead clients to perceive a distinctive product image in relation to its competitors' products (Wilke, 1994; Stanton, 1984). Sometimes the positioning of the product is referred to as "clustering techniques". The product positioning aids managers or business owners in deciding how clients see or interpret their products in the market (McCarthy, 1981).

Futrell (1990) stated that the term product positioning has no generally accepted definition. The six areas of product positioning were as follows: (1) positioning in relation to a competitor also called head-to-head competition (for example, competing directly with another competitor in custom clothing who offers similar products or services, or in the apparel industry Eddie Bauer and Columbia Sportswear compete head to head); (2) positioning by a product attribute associated with some feature (for example, a product attribute associated with custom clothing would be to offer made-to-measure clothing); (3) positioning by price and quality such as high-quality merchandise (for example, a product/service made better than ready-to-wear.); (4) positioning in relation to product use (for example, creating products/services for a specific area of custom clothing such as bridal wear); (5) positioning in relation to a target market (for example, career wear for women, large sizes, women age 55 and older). and (6) positioning in relation to a product-class disassociation (for example, using fabrics from natural fiber rather than fabrics from manufactured fiber or leather or suede rather than Ultrasuede<sup>®</sup>).

Positioning requires analyzing the market segment and determining how to establish the perception of custom clothing products/services to the clients in the marketplace. This might involve selling one-of-a-kind garments, career wear, or high-quality craftsmanship of custom garments. The marketing position created changes with current market conditions. Continuous monitoring, keeping up-to-date on market changes and knowledge of the clients' buying motives and segments they fit into can aid in positioning. The custom clothier needs to be able to stay abreast of fashion changes associated with the needs of their clientele. (for example, advice on style features in pant silhouettes both flattering and fashionable).

In Barbara Skyes' book The "Business" of Sewing (1992) and Kathleen Spike's book Sew to Success (1990), the authors focus on the importance of positioning custom clothing services as high quality

construction, fitting expertise, high value, and serving a specialized need such as bridal sewing, tailoring, or alterations. Duncan (1991) found that successful custom clothing entrepreneurs listed satisfied clients/good client relations, good quality workmanship, good sewing skills, an adequate pricing structure, and dependability as the most important factors for success in their businesses.

### The Uncontrollable 5 C's of Marketing

The four P's in marketing (product, place, price, and promotion) are controllable variables, but there are five uncontrollable variables to consider related to marketing. These five uncontrollable variables or constraints were competitors, company, channels, conditions, and customers/clients (Wilke, 1994).

#### Competitive Constraint

Competitive constraint could involve conditions that could be exclusive (no competitors), selective (few competitors), or intensive (many competitors). Competitive constraint could affect the success of the business and involves custom clothier home-based business owners knowledge to create marketing mixes to persuade clients to patronize their business. It becomes more difficult to make a profit as the market becomes saturated with competition. Marketing mix decisions are subject to change depending on the number of competitors. The marketer must search for the consumer advantage for the product/service. Spike (1990) stated that not all custom dressmakers in a geographic area were in competition with each other. Each might focus on a different price/value structure to market their products/services. Some areas of custom clothing may not have any competition at all in their community.

#### Company Constraint

Company constraint involves various problems. The problems encountered under company constraint could include lack of a financial base, strengths and weaknesses of the people implementing the marketing mix and cultural differences. Company constraints found by Duncan (1991) among unsuccessful custom clothing businesses were lack of owner's marketing experience, lack of business guidance, lack of experience in financial planning, lack of clients, isolated geographic location, lack of management experience, taking a better job, and lack of time to devote to the business. Successful clothing business owners that went out of business stated that it was due to lack of time to devote to the business, family/personal illness, acceptance of a better job, or a family move.



### Channel Constraints

As was stated under place, the primary channel for the home-based business owner is the home and might be an inhibiting factor in locating clientele. Also as was stated in the introduction under economic considerations, having the business in the home does not require the payment of rent each month, there is not the time involved in commuting back and forth to the workplace, and the custom clothier has the option of working flexible hours. However, there might be a need or desire to locate channels away from their home to distribute their product/services through an outside independent wholesaler, retailer, or by scheduling appointments with the clientele at their homes. The bridal custom clothier might use florists and/or caterers as a means of a channel other than the home-based business for locating clientele and satisfying their needs. Difficulties with securing these outside channel for the custom clothing home-based business might be the difficulty of creating products/services that require made-to-measure specifications of clientele in other locations than the home.

If the custom clothier home-based business owner does have the ability to secure channels away from their home-based business there might be other complexities. In a study by Biggs (1984) it was found that textile craftspeople felt consigning their products involved continuous risk to the artist for potential damage to the product while on display, some new galleries paid slowly or not at all, and clients using the artists work wanted custom orders completed in unreasonable time periods. Littrell, Stout, and Reilly (1991) discovered that smaller communities might provide examples of channel constraints. There might be limited potential for growth in sales to the local populace if the supply of crafts or products/services exceeds local consumer demand. Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly (1991) found that consumers utilizing all three services of sewing alterations, sewing new products, and design services were more willing to travel outside the community to have this work completed. Consumers who primarily used alteration services were not as willing to travel distances to have the service completed.

### Conditions Constraint

Conditions constraint might be either positive or negative in respect to the marketing of the custom clothier home-based business. Conditions constraint involves external factors of economic, labor, legal, and weather conditions that the custom clothier home-based business owner must be able to adjust the marketing mix in order to do business. The following paragraphs describe some of the external factors involved with adapting to the uncontrollable conditions constraint that take account of: 1) economic, 2) legal, 3) labor, and 4) weather conditions.

#### Economic Conditions

Economic conditions are identified as inflation, recession, and changes in monetary exchange rates. All of these can affect the marketing of the product. The marketing manager or business owner adapts the marketing mix in order for the business to remain a success. Shama (1993) considered small business to be more directly affected by changes in the environment due to their business strategy of marketing to a niche. For small businesses marketing to niches during economically slow or depressed times, Shama (1993) recommended they could redefine their target clients and marketing mix, narrow the range of product/services offered, offer cheaper products and quantity discounts, lower prices, or increase promotion. The custom clothier might be faced with slow or depressed economic times if the income has decreased for the majority of his/her clientele. The clientele's income might be decreased due to forced early retirement, loss of a high paying job, or the client's company relocating to another location outside the local area. If the custom clothier is faced with this situation he or she will need to determine the best strategies as defined above to continue maintaining the custom clothing home-based business at a profit. On the otherhand, during periods of high income, clients might seek custom clothing sources as a means to differentiate their business image.

#### Legal Conditions

The government in the United States of America has enacted legislation to protect consumers with purchases in the area of apparel and textile products. Both the Federal Trade Commission and the Consumer Product Safety Commission have been involved in passing laws regarding the use of clothing and textiles. The following are examples of specific legislation that has been passed and might be of

concern to custom clothiers or their clientele: the Federal Trade Commission's Ruling on the Weighting of Silk in 1938, the Wool Products Labeling Act in 1939, the Fur Products Labeling Act in 1951, the Flammable Fabrics Act in 1953, the Textile Fiber Products Identification Act in 1960, and the Permanent Care Labeling Ruling of the Federal Trade Commission in 1972. Each of these acts of legislation will be discussed separately.

The Federal Trade Commission Ruling on the Weighting of Silk 1938. Custom clothiers or clientele of custom clothiers purchasing silk in the United States of America are guaranteed by the government that the silk is not weighted more than 10% with metallic salts unless it has been dyed the color black and then it might contain up to 15% of the metallic salts to give it body and better draping qualities. However, if the silk fabric has been purchased outside the United States, these government regulations do not apply. If there are problems associated with the fabric quality purchases outside the United States after the custom clothier has provided the services, the custom clothier is not responsible for any damage that might be caused by the use of too much of the metallic salts that has been added to the fabric unless the custom clothier was the actual purchaser of the fabric (Tortora, 1992; Hatch, 1993).

Wool Products Labeling Act 1939 (amended 1984). Since consumers were faced with the issue of identifying if the wool product they were purchasing was new wool, virgin wool, or recycled wool, the Wool Products Labeling Act was enacted in 1939. However, this act not only protects the consumers or clientele of custom clothiers, but the custom clothiers' business functions as well. Wool products that are new or virgin wool must be labeled as such. Wool products that are recycled must be labeled as such. If the client of the custom clothier purchases a piece of wool fabric for a product or service to be completed by the custom clothier, it must be labeled and identified as either new wool, virgin wool, or recycled wool. This protects both the custom clothier or client who is purchasing wool for a garment and wants to know the content of the fabric (Tortora, 1992; Hatch, 1993).

The Fur Products Labeling Act 1951. The custom clothier or the client must both be aware if the fur purchased to produce a product or already used on a product that needs to be altered is real or fake. All real fur is required to be identified with the country of origin and the type of animal it came from. Also if the fur has been damaged during natural processes or has been bleached, dyed or had any other treatments

during processing this must be disclosed on a label. This protects the custom clothier by allowing him or her knowledge about the fur fabric, so they cannot be charged with ruining the fabric after they have worked on it. (Tortora, 1992, Hatch, 1993).

The Flammable Fabrics Act 1953. The Flammable Fabrics Act was enacted to protect consumers making a purchase of fabrics or products constructed with textiles that were extremely flammable. This act particularly protects the client or custom clothier who is associated with childrens' sleepwear, outdoor wear such as shirts that might be used near campfires, or occupational clothing that is worn near machinery with flames. The Consumer Product Safety Commission of the United States requires that fabrics free of nap, pile, tufting, flocking, or other raised surfaces "shall be classified as class 1, normal flammability, when the time of flame spread is three and one-half seconds or more, and as class 3, rapid and intense burning when the time of flame spread is less than three and one-half seconds" (Tortora, 1992, p 498, Hatch, 1993).

The Textile Fiber Products Identification Act (TFPIA) 1960. Due to the consumer's inability to be able to differentiate the manufactured fibers that were entering the market in increasing numbers after World War II by their names or the various blends of fabrics that were being manufactured, the Textile Fiber Products Identification Act was enacted in 1960. The Textile Products Identification Act required that fibers must not only be identified with a label, but must also be identified in the order of the percentage of the fiber by weight that is present in the product. The generic name of the fiber must be listed on a label, but the trademark name is optional. If there is less than five percent of a fiber in a product, it must be listed as "other fiber", unless it has a specific purpose as in the case of Spandex adding elastomeric properties to a fabric. The amendment in 1984 required that the country of origin also be included on the label. This act protects either custom clothiers or clients purchasing fabric. They have the right to know the content of the fabric they are purchasing (Tortora, 1992, Hatch, 1993).

Permanent Care Labeling Ruling of the Federal Trade Commission 1972. . Custom made garments that are made from fabric provided by the client do not require a label for care instructions. However, the care instructions that are required on the label of all wearing apparel or fabrics sold by the yard must be identified for the custom clothier to determine procedures for use on the fabric for a product or service. The custom clothier might also need to know washing instructions such as hand or machine

wash or if dry clean only is required, along with the appropriate drying methods such as line dry or various drying temperatures. Of particular interest would be the information about ironing procedures such as ironing temperatures or procedures if they are available for use on the product. (Tortora, 1992, Hatch, 1993).

### Labor Conditions

Legislation has been passed to protect those people who chose to work at home for an employer in the clothing and textiles industry. Although, homework is not typically associated with the management of a home-based business, some of the custom clothier home-based work might be from an outside employer in the form of industrial work. The Fair Labor Standards Act was passed in 1938 to ensure that homeworkers in the clothing and textiles industry would be paid minimum wage. The Department of Labor in 1938, restricted the manufacturing of industrial homework in the following seven industries: 1) knitted outerwear, 2) women's apparel, 3) jewelry manufacturing, 4) gloves and mittens, 5) button and buckle manufacturing, 6) handkerchiefs manufacturing, and 7) embroideries. This law was set due to the difficulty of enforcing the minimum wage law legislation. However, in 1988, the law was rescinded and the ban was lifted on five of the industries that were: 1) gloves and mittens, 2) buttons and buckles, 3) embroideries, 4) handkerchiefs, and 5) segments of jewelry that do not involve hazardous substances or processes ("Employment of homeworkers in certain industries", 1988).

### Customer/client Constraint

Customer/client constraint may be the most important of the five uncontrollable variables in the area of marketing. The 4 C's of competition, company, channel, and conditions affect the client constraint. Johnson, Littrell, and Reilly's (1991) study of consumer behavior of users of custom clothing services revealed that clients expected speedy work, agreement on completion date and provision of a written price estimate at first meeting, itemized receipts, and acceptance of personal checks when utilizing custom clothing services in Iowa. The custom clothier home-based business owner might be faced with a situation involving several clients requiring her/his services at one time and all the clients want the products/services completed very quickly. Clients of custom clothiers might not be aware of the physical demands of producing the product/services and the amount of time involved. Ready-to-wear is always on the rack and

can be purchased immediately without much thought as to how much time was required to produce the garment or the skills involved. The custom clothier strives to maintain high quality and might need to turn down requests from clients that are expecting work to be produced too quickly or for a bargain (Shaeffer, 1984).

### Marketing Support Through an Organization

The Small Business Administration has developed a program called the Business Development Center in response to the needs of small business owners. The program includes workshops on business basics. The area of marketing is discussed as a section of the program. It was suggested that the small business or home-based business owner who wants to concentrate on meeting peers who specialize in their particular area of business, the business owner could become an active member of a professional organization.

Membership in a professional organization is a means to network, learn, or develop stronger marketing skills. Networking or sharing, exchanging, and supporting each other is an essential business skill in order to survive and make profits. Owners of small businesses might turn to small locally based networking groups for help in business or promotion problems. The networking base can increase the entrepreneur's knowledge as well as be a contact base (Silver, 1998).

Taylor (1996) described the advantages of a group's networking skills with an example from the American Business Women's Association (ABWA). Members of the group meet for about two hours monthly and help each other with advertising, marketing, and management challenges. By utilizing the abilities of a group the members brainstorm ideas together.

Morey (1998) found that not only can an organization help its members, but also sometimes the members' involvement helps the organization. Mary McIntire, an ABWA member in Richmond, Virginia, felt that she has learned some necessary skills to increase her self-confidence and she received the chance to broaden her sphere of activities by being involved in an organization. Mary McIntire's position of chapter publicist involved writing press releases for the local newspaper and gaining experience with cable television for promotional pieces. Due to her participation as the chapter publicist, she helped to broaden the chapter's membership base.

One of the goals and objectives of the members of the present organization under study is quoted from Kathleen Spike, a PACC member: "One of the main goals is to work to elevate your professional visibility and status in the eyes of the public both locally and nationally" (Skyles, 1992). Skyles (1992) further stated that membership in the PACC and networking could build a support system of a group of peers, sharing valuable information in the trade or field of specialty, increasing business through referrals, and saving on notions and supplies through the organization's bulk buying program.

An area of focus in the current study was to describe beneficial marketing support that members of the PACC receive from their organization. The study further identified future potential marketing support that the members perceive could be beneficial to the organization that is not available to them at this time.

### Summary

The management of a home-based custom clothing business is not an easy task. The home-based custom clothing business owner has the responsibility as the research and development manager, production manager, marketing manager, and accountant. Past studies have shown that the area of marketing is of particular concern to home-based custom clothing business owners (Bastow-Shoop, 1990).

The marketing of the home-based custom clothing business is essential to the business owner if she/he wants to make a profit. Marketing strategy is a step involved in carrying out the marketing concept. Other steps include identifying the target market and determining how to satisfy the needs of the clientele. A small business owner such as a custom clothier offers goods and services to a specific group of clients or a niche (Delaney, 1995). The niche or target market is either geographically segmented or customer/client segmented. The custom clothier needs to determine if her/his or their product/service can be made available to clients outside the local area and if there is a demand for the product/service by a specific group of clientele. An area of concern for the home-based business owner is diversification and/or new product/technique development.

The marketing mix involves strategic planning and utilization of the four P's: price, place, promotion, and product in marketing. The combination of these four elements is the core of the custom clothiers marketing system (Stanton, 1984). After the marketing mix has been determined the custom clothier needs to examine the issue of positioning. Positioning in marketing refers to the design of a marketing mix that will lead clients to perceive a distinctive image in relation to its competitors' products

(Wilke, 1994, Stanton, 1984). Positioning involves analyzing the market segment and determining what must be done to encourage consumers to buy the product.

The five uncontrollable variables of marketing include competitive constraint, company constraint, channel constraint, condition constraint, and customer/client constraint. Of the five variables, customer/client constraint may be the most difficult to manage. The client determines if the product/services of the custom clothier home-based business owner will be utilized for their needs and wants of custom clothing products/services.

Marketing assistance through membership in an organization can be a valuable tool to assist small business owners in learning marketing skills as well as networking. The organization might need to determine how much time to devote to membership meetings that include marketing as a topic.

There have been various research studies completed on custom clothiers in the past, but none have specifically focused on the area of marketing strategies. The present research surveyed home-based business custom clothiers who were members affiliated with the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC).



### CHAPTER 3 METHOD

The purpose of this study was to investigate the marketing strategies of home-based custom clothiers affiliated as members with the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC). Selected demographic characteristics, general business information, marketing strategies, and current and potential future marketing support from the PACC organization were analyzed. Respondents that owned custom clothing home-based businesses who had marketing experience and/or education were compared to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education. Marketing was a factor compared to selected factors including geographic range of clientele, number of competitors in the local area, requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings (new product/technique development), and satisfaction of level of profits from the business.

The five objectives for this research project were as follows:

1. To describe selected demographics of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC.
2. To identify marketing strategies of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC in terms of:
  - (a) ascertaining the perceived needs of the custom clothier's clientele
  - (b) identifying the most effective selling points
  - (c) setting a marketable price for products/services
  - (d) identifying the most effective methods of promotion
  - (e) identifying the geographic range of clientele
  - (f) ascertaining the main sources of useful new product information
3. To identify current marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.
4. To identify potential future marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.
5. To compare the marketing strategies of members who have had marketing experience and/or education to those members who have not had marketing experience and/or education in terms of:

- (a) The members whose clientele is within a 50 mile radius of their home to those whose clientele is outside the 50 mile radius of their home.
- (b) The custom clothier who has between 0 to 1, 2 to 3, and 4 or more competitors within a 50 mile radius of their home.
- (c) The custom clothier whose clientele requests new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings to the custom clothier whose clientele does not request new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.
- (d) The custom clothier who is satisfied with their level of profits from the business to the custom clothier who is not satisfied with the level of profit from the business.

#### Questionnaire Development

A self-administered, mailed questionnaire was developed to collect data for this survey. The format of the questionnaire was developed following the recommendations of Dillman (1978). The questionnaire content was adapted from a questionnaire used by Duggan (1988) to investigate the marketing practices of textile related home-based business owners. Content was revised and based on information gained from the review of literature, the PACC newsletter, input from researchers and experts in the field of Family and Consumer Sciences, and suggestions from committee members.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: marketing information, general business information, and selected demographic characteristics. Questionnaire item #1 was designed to be a screening question to determine if the participants owned a home-based business. (See Questionnaire in Appendix A.)

#### Marketing Information

The marketing information section included questionnaire items #5 to #20. These questionnaire items investigated marketing strategies utilized by the respondents. Questionnaire items were included to gather information regarding the current marketing support and possible options for future marketing support from the organization that respondents perceived as being beneficial.

Respondents were asked to rank order their responses for questionnaire item #7 product/service offered, #12 main sources of new product information, and #13 setting a marketable price. A rank order scale was chosen due to the possibility that selecting only one answer might be difficult. The respondents were asked to rank their choices as first, second, and third choices. An open ended question and a rank order scale question item were included about new product development (items #8 and #11). These questionnaire items were included to ascertain if there were any products/services that were sometimes requested by the clients but not offered by the respondents or if the client ever requested new embellishments, fabrics, and interfacings with which the respondent was not accustomed to using.

A five point Likert-Scale was used to measure questionnaire items #14, the most effective promotion method. The scale was anchored with the terms "very effective" (1) to "not very effective at all" (5) for the promotion method. The scale was provided with an option of "have not used at all". Refer to the questionnaire in Appendix A for a listing of the types of promotion measured by the Likert-Scale. Open-ended questionnaire items #15 and #16 were used to identify the most effective promotion method and the most cost efficient method of promotion.

A five point Likert-Scale was used to measure questionnaire item #17, marketing support from the organization. The scale was anchored with the terms "very beneficial" (1) to "not very beneficial" (5). The scale was provided with an option of "have not used at all". Marketing support from the Oregon Chapter of PACC included a referral system, a promotion method derived membership in the organization. The referral system is an opportunity for the members to have their products, service, or product/service critiqued by a board of PACC members. Upon approval of meeting the PACC standards the members are included on a referral list in the yellow pages and at fabric stores. The PACC advertises through the yellow pages under the listing of tailoring. A phone number found under this listing in the Portland Metropolitan area yellow pages promotes all PACC members in the Oregon Chapter who qualify for the referral list. A voice mail message reads the names and phone numbers of each member's custom clothier business that is individually listed under various specialties such as alterationists, dressmaking, bridal, etc. If a PACC member finds she needs to refer a client to another custom clothier business, she is asked to refer clientele to members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC who have qualified for the referral list. Refer to the questionnaire in Appendix A to find a listing of other items of marketing support offered by the PACC

organization that were included on the Likert-Scale. An open-ended questionnaire item #18 was used to measure the most beneficial item of marketing support from the organization.

A constant sum scale was used for questionnaire item #5. The constant sum scale asked the respondent to divide the percentage of her clientele between the categories of local (within a 50 mile radius of the business), statewide, northwest regional, national, or international with a total of 100%. The scale was used to identify the widest geographic range of the respondent's clientele. An open-ended item #6 followed the constant sum scale to ascertain why the respondent had clientele outside the local area.

Questionnaire item #10 was included to measure the number of competitors the respondent perceived that he/she had in the local area. The respondent was given three choices that were 0 to 1 competitors, 2 to 3 competitors, and 4 or more competitors.

Questionnaire items #19 and #20 were open-ended questions. The open ended questions allowed the respondent to describe or explain in her own words any other organizations to which she was a member that offered support in the marketing of the home-based custom clothing business and ideas for potential future marketing support for the PACC organization.

#### General Business Information

The general business information section consisted of questionnaire items #2, #3, #4, #21, #22, #23, and #24. Open ended and closed ended questions were used to measure the number of years the respondent had been in business, the closest metropolitan area to their business, the number of years the respondent had been a member of the PACC, the type of business output such as product, service, or product and service combined, total household income provided by the business, if the respondent had marketing experience and/or education, and if the business owner was satisfied with the level of profits from the business.

#### Selected Demographic Characteristics

The selected demographic characteristics that were measured for this research included age, the respondent's means of attaining dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making skills, and the highest level of education completed by the respondent. Questionnaire items #25, #26, and #27 were all closed ended questions.

### Pretest

The questionnaire was pre-tested by five local subjects who either owned a custom clothier home-based business at the time of the pre-test or had previously owned a custom clothier home-based business. The pre-test was completed to identify any ambiguous, unclear, or confusing questions before mailing the final draft for the survey. There were only a few categorical and grammatical changes made to the questionnaire based on the pre-test results.

### Survey Sample

#### Population Selection

The sample for this research project was home-based custom clothiers who were members of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC). The PACC is a non-profit national organization developed to be a support group for home-based and commercial businesses in apparel and textiles fields (Professional Association of Custom Clothiers, 1999). The Oregon Chapter of the PACC was selected as it is the charter organization of the PACC and is located near the Portland Metropolitan area in close proximity to Oregon State University. Marketing strategies and marketing support, the focus of this study, are available through membership in the PACC would be of interest to the members in the organization. Therefore, the Oregon Chapter of the PACC was contacted and asked if they would be interested in participating in the survey. They were interested in a survey on marketing strategies and permission was granted through their board members to allow the use of their newsletter mailing list as a sampling frame for the survey. At the time of the survey there were 82 members in the Oregon Chapter. A convenience sample of all members of the chapter was used to obtain the necessary information to meet the objectives of this study. All current members of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC were mailed a survey.

#### Informed Consent

Human subjects participating in research projects at Oregon State University are required to sign an informed consent form that explains the nature of the research. The informed consent ensures the protection of the subjects as well as the researcher and the university. In the case of a mail survey, the respondents' return of the completed questionnaire affirmed their consent to participate in the survey. The subjects were informed, in a letter of introduction mailed with the questionnaire, that their participation was

voluntary, and that they may cease participation at any time. The subjects received the name and telephone number of the researcher if they had additional questions or concerns about the study (See Appendix A, cover letter).

#### Data Collection Method

A mail survey method best accomplished the survey objectives within the time and budget limits of this study. The questionnaire was mailed to each member of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC. Dillman's (1978) procedures for mail surveys were followed for all mailings. The time frame for this survey was approximately 2 months. The first mailing was completed in May, 1999. The cover letter introduced the researcher, explained the study, encouraged the subjects to participate and assured the subject of confidentiality. The next mailing included a follow up post card sent one week later to thank the participants who had returned their questionnaire and served as a reminder to those who had not yet returned theirs (See Appendix A, postcard). The second follow up mailing to nonrespondents was mailed three weeks after the original mailing. It included a new cover letter with a restatement of appeal and a replacement questionnaire (See Appendix A, second cover letter). The third (final) follow up mailing was completed at the end of the first week in July. It included a replacement questionnaire and a cover letter with a restatement of appeal and notice that this would be the last mailing as well as a replacement questionnaire. All mailings were sent using university department letterhead stationary. A self-addressed stamped envelope was used to increase the response rate as recommended by Dillman (1978) and also all subjects were offered a copy of the results of the survey as an incentive for their participation.

#### Data Analysis

The information obtained from this survey was considered to be a nonprobability convenience sample of the custom clothier home-based business owners who were members affiliated with the Oregon Chapter of PACC. Nonprobability used in statistics refers to the sample being obtained without any use of random selection. Random selection is a process that allows the selection of the subjects for the sample by a specific method. Random selection is done to insure that all the population of the subjects being sampled have an equal opportunity of being included. Since the sample was not selected randomly, the data analyzed cannot be identified as having a probable chance of reoccurring with the same results as the

researcher cannot be certain if the respondents that participated were truly representative of the entire population of home-based custom clothiers in the PACC. However, in this survey all members were mailed a survey, which did not require any selection process of what members would be involved in the survey. The sample was considered a convenience sample since not all the questionnaires were returned. No inferences to a larger population or causal conclusions could be drawn from the study without random selection or with the use of a convenience, nonprobability sample.

The data were analyzed using a statistical analysis program, Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS) version 7. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics that included frequencies and percentages. In addition, a more involved tool in statistics that compares columns and rows of data called two-by-two tables, were also used to analyze the data.

#### Tests Used

Descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies were used to fulfill Objectives #1 through #4 as described previously in this Chapter 3. Percentages and frequencies give an overall picture of the information obtained from the respondents. The responses analyzed by percents and frequencies included 1) selected demographic characteristics, 2) marketing strategies used, 3) current marketing support from the PACC organization, and 4) respondents' suggestions for future marketing support from the PACC organization.

Two-by-two tables were used to fulfill objective #5 and complete the comparison between the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to the respondents who did not have marketing experience and/or education. Marketing experience and/or education was considered as a factor in this study and was located in the column of the two-by-two table. There were four two-by-two tables used for the comparison, each comparing the factor of marketing experience and/or education to four other factors located in the rows of the two-by-two tables. The four other factors selected for analysis in this study were geographic range of the clientele, number of competitors in the local area, requests for fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings, and satisfaction with the level of profits of the business. Fisher's Exact Test was used to fulfill the analysis of the two-by-two tables in Objective #5.

### Fisher's Exact Test versus Chi-Square

Fisher's Exact Test, a "gold standard" test for two-by-two tables, was chosen to analyze the data rather than the traditional Chi-Square test for two-by-two tables (Ramsey and Schafer, 1997). Fisher's Exact Test was used based on the small cell values found in the two-by-two tables for analysis. Moore and McCabe (1993, p.635) stated: "When the expected cell counts are small, it is best to use the test based on the exact distribution rather than the chi-square approximation, particularly for 2x2 tables". Ramsey and Schafer (1997) stated that the Chi-Squared approximation might be invalid with cell sizes of five or less. Yates (1984) further stated that cell counts of five or less are of particular concern. When the Fisher's Exact Test is used for analysis the possibility of using divisors of zero or one that occurs with the traditional Chi-Square distribution is eliminated. Due to the small number of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education, some of the cells in the two-by-two tables had cell counts of five or less. Therefore, Fisher's Exact Test was chosen over the traditional Chi-Square approximation.

### Fisher's Exact Test

Fisher's Exact Test was used as a test for homogeneity allowing the respondents to be divided into two groups. The two groups of respondents were those respondents who had marketing experience and/or education and those respondents who did not have marketing experience and/or education. Fisher's Exact Test works by subtracting the proportions of the respondents in the lower left cell of the two-by-two table from the proportions of the responses in the upper left cell of the table. The proportions of the upper and lower left cells in the two-by-two tables were arrived at comparing the row value in the cell to the total number of responses in both the rows of the left and right cells. The analysis was then completed by the use of a permutation test that regrouped all possibilities of the proportions of the responses in the two-by-two table. A p-value of .05 was used to identify if the group of numbers found in cells of the two-by-two table from the survey, compared to all other possible combinations of observations that could be found in the two-by-two table by using Fisher's Exact Test as a permutation tool to regroup all possible combinations, was as extreme or more extreme in comparison to all other regroupings. Fisher's Exact Test reveals exact one-sided and two-sided p-values. The one-sided p-value identifies if the proportions of the responses in the left side of the two-by-two table were greater than the proportions of the responses in the right side of the two-by-two table when all possible regroupings have been considered in the analysis. The two-sided p-



value cannot differentiate if the proportion of the responses in the left side of the two-by-two table were greater than the proportions of the responses in the right side of the two-by-two table. However, the two-sided p-value is used to identify if the two groups were homogeneous or similar in proportions.

#### Level of Significance

Significant was used in this study to describe the percent of possible regroupings of the responses that were considered to be as extreme or more extreme than the one observed to discuss the results of Objective Five, which compared the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education. The level of significance for this study was .05. The level of .05 was identified according to Neuman's (1997) statement that .05 is a common significance level for the analysis of data. The level of .05 identifies that finding a p-value as extreme or more extreme will only be incorrect one in twenty times. A smaller p-value of .01 would only be incorrect 1 in 100 times, however, a larger sample size might be required to find a p-value of this size (Terrell, 1999).

#### Reliability and Validity of the Survey

The survey and any findings have no meaning unless they are reliable and valid. The reliability and validity of the survey were considered during all processes of the research involving the review of literature, instrument development, sample selection, and analysis of the data. The following description shows how the reliability and validity were considered during the process of the survey research.

#### Reliability

The reliability of a questionnaire is its ability to produce the same results over and over. Reliability of the questionnaire requires that it be stable over time, representative across subgroups, and equivalent across indicators (Neuman, 1997). Neuman (1997) described the following principles to improve the reliability of a questionnaire. The four principles were:

- 1) clearly conceptualize constructs.
- 2) use a precise level of measurement
- 3) use multiple indicators
- 4) use pilot tests (p 140).

These principles were used in the development of the questionnaire for the current study.

## Validity

The validity identifies if the processes used and findings of the survey were truly representative of what the study's purpose. There are three types of validity to be concerned with in this study: internal validity, external validity, and statistical validity ( McDaniel and Gates, 1996; Neuman, 1997).

### Internal Validity

Internal validity describes the validity of the instrument used; in this study the instrument was the questionnaire. Internal validity includes four categories: face validity, content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity. These four types of validity are interrelated and were described in the following discussion.

Face Validity. Face validity is the judgement of others in the scientific community that the questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. McDaniel and Gates (1996) refer to an example of face validity as the question of "What is your age?" followed by a series of age categories. It is expected that the subject can accurately select the appropriate age category.

Content Validity. Content validity is more in depth than face validity and measures the content of the questionnaire in relation to objectives of the research. Content validity requires that the researcher 1) define precisely what is to be measured, 2) used an exhaustive literature review, 3) get opinions from a panel of experts, (e.g. this was completed in a AIHM 507 seminar discussion) and 4) pretest the instrument (e.g. the instrument as mentioned previously was pre-tested by a group of local custom clothier home-based business owners for use) and allows respondents the option of open ended questions to identify items omitted. An "other" category was added to all questions that required a closed ended response as was discussed in the questionnaire development. (McDaniel and Gates, 1996).

Criterion Validity. Criterion validity identifies if the instrument measures a specific criterion. In the current research there were five criteria: 1) demographic characteristics, 2) marketing strategies, 3) current marketing support from the PACC organization, 4) future potential marketing support from the PACC organization, and 5) a comparison of the members who have had marketing experience and/or education to those members who have not had marketing experience and/or education. Criterion validity

was divided into two subcategories of 1) concurrent, the questionnaire or study agrees with a preexisting measure, and 2) predictive, it agrees with future behavior.

Construct Validity. Construct validity requires that multiple indicators were consistent. Construct validity was divided into two subcategories of convergent validity, the alike indicators were similar and give similar results, and discriminant validity, that different indicators are different and give results to represent their difference (McDaniel and Gates, 1996; Neuman, 1997). Construct validity was not used as a measure of validity in the current study.

Various items might threaten internal validity. In the current study the items considered were: 1) selection bias (e.g. the use or nonuse of random selection or the selection of the sampling frame), 2) testing (e.g. testing through a mail survey could be risky as it is slow and the surveys might be thrown away as junk mail), 3) instrumentation (e.g. problems with internal validity were discussed in the previous paragraphs), 4) compensatory behavior (e.g. what could be used to compensate the respondents without affecting their behavior) and 5) experimenter expectancy (e.g. analyzing an organization might produce results that the members perceive they need to reply with) (McDaniel and Gates, 1996; Neuman, 1997).

#### External Validity

External validity is described as the ability to generalize findings from the sample selected to a larger or broader range of people. High external validity results when the findings can be generalized to many situations and groups of people. Low validity results when the findings only apply to the sample group itself (McDaniel and Gates, 1996; Neuman, 1997). Although, the sample under observation in the current study was nonprobability and the results cannot be generalized to a larger group the data obtained was still beneficial. Ramsey and Schafer (1997, p.6-7) stated that “establishing causation is not always the goal of research, and analysis of observational data may lead to evidence toward causal theories and suggestions for future research.”

#### Statistical Validity

Statistical validity results when the correct statistical procedure is selected. Statistical validity also requires that the assumptions for the statistical procedure were fully met (Neuman, 1997). Statistical validity was described under the subject of tests used previously in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the marketing strategies of custom clothing home-based business owners. The data for this survey was obtained from members affiliated with the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC) who were custom clothier home-based business owners at the time of the survey. At the time the study was conducted there were 82 members in the Oregon Chapter of PACC. All members were mailed a questionnaire.

The focus of the research was to analyze selected demographic characteristics, general business information, marketing strategies, and current and potential future marketing support from the PACC organization. A comparison of the respondents that owned custom clothing home-based businesses who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education followed the analysis. The comparison included using Fisher's Exact Test to analyze the proportions of the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education. Marketing was identified as the column factor and the row factors included geographic range, number of competitors in the local area, new product/technique development, and satisfaction of level of profits from the business.

### Questionnaire Response Data

Sixty-nine of the eighty-two questionnaires were returned. A questionnaire was considered useable if 75% or more of the questionnaire items had been completed. Of the sixty-nine questionnaires returned, forty-five were considered useable. Table 4.1 shows the description of the total number questionnaires mailed and returned/not returned.

Table 4.1  
Reconciliation of Questionnaire Mailing

	Number	Percent
<b>Mailed questionnaires</b>	<b>82</b>	
Total returned questionnaires	69	
<b>Criteria not met:</b>		
<b>(1) No home-based business</b>	<b>17</b>	
As screened by questionnaire item #1 on the questionnaire		
<b>Total questionnaires used for response rate</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>
Undeliverable questionnaires	1	
Questionnaires not returned	12	
Unuseable questionnaires		
Did not want to participate	2	
Missing Data	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Total useable questionnaires</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>69</b>

The response rate calculation for this survey was based on completed questionnaires divided by total questionnaires minus criteria not met or those who did not own a custom clothier home-based business. This removed seventeen of the total questionnaires leaving a conservative response rate calculation for this survey as 69% (Koenig, 1998).

**Response Rate Calculation:**

$$\text{Useable questionnaires divided by (Total questionnaires minus criteria not met)} \\ 45 / (82 - 17) = 69\%$$

The data from the 45 questionnaires were analyzed and are described in the following five sections: 1) selected demographic characteristics, 2) marketing strategies, 3) current marketing support from the PACC organization 4) potential future marketing support from the PACC organizations, and 5) a comparison of the custom clothing home-based business owners who had marketing experience and/or education to those members who had not had marketing experience and/or education .

Objective One:  
Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Location of Custom Clothier Home-Based Businesses

Of the 45 respondents, 86.67% were located in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. The remaining 6 respondents (13.33%) were located in suburbs of the Portland metropolitan area, Beaverton and Tualitan, or in Salem (40 miles from Portland), and Seattle, Washington (160 miles from Portland). Refer to Table 4.2, the Location of Custom Clothing Home-Based Business.

Table 4.2  
Location of Custom Clothing Home-based Business

Location	Number of Responses	Percent
<b>Metropolitan Area</b>		
Portland, Oregon	39	
<b>Total from Portland Metropolitan Area</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>86.67</b>
Suburb of Portland, Oregon		
Beaverton, Oregon	1	
Tualitan, Oregon	1	
Salem, Oregon <sup>1</sup>	2	
Seattle, Washington <sup>1</sup>	2	
<b>Total from Outside the Portland Metropolitan Area</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>1</sup>Two members indicated that they were combined Salem/Portland and Seattle/Portland. Two members also indicated they had recently relocated their custom clothing home-based business.

### Length of Membership

The survey revealed that 80% of the respondents indicated they had been members of the PACC for three years or more. Four of the members indicated that they had been members for 15 years and were charter members of the PACC organization. Refer to Table 4.3, Years as a Member of the Oregon Chapter of PACC.

Table 4.3  
Years as a Member of the Oregon Chapter of PACC

Years	Number of Responses	Percent <sup>1</sup>
.41	1	2.22
1	3	6.66
1.5	1	2.22
2	3	6.66
2.5	1	2.22
3	7	15.56
5	1	2.22
6	1	2.22
7	2	4.44
8	5	11.11
9	3	6.66
10	6	13.33
11	2	4.44
12	2	4.44
13	1	2.22
14	2	4.44
15	4	8.88
Total	45	99.91

<sup>1</sup> Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

### Length of Business Ownership

The number of years the custom clothier home-based business owner had owned their business varied from 8 months to 35 years. The greatest percentage (13.33%) of the respondents had owned their business for 12 years. The next most frequent response was a three-way tie at 8.88% including members who had owned their business for 3 years, 15 years, and 20 years. One member had owned her business for 35 years (2.22%). Refer to Table 4.4, Years of Owning a Home-Based Custom Clothing Business.

Table 4.4  
Years of Owning a Home-Based Custom Clothing Business

Years	Number of Responses	Percent <sup>1</sup>
.75	1	2.22
1	1	2.22
1.5	1	2.22
2	3	6.66
3	4	8.88
4	1	2.22
6	2	4.44
7	1	2.22
8	3	6.66
9	1	2.22
10	3	6.66
11	2	4.44
12	6	13.33
14	1	2.22
15	4	8.88
16	2	4.44
17	1	2.22
18	3	6.66
19	1	2.22
20	4	8.88
35	1	2.22
Total	45	99.91

<sup>1</sup> Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

#### Age of Respondents

The respondents ranged in age from 20 to 60 plus years. The greatest percentage of respondents was between 41 to 50 years of age (33.33%). The next largest category was 51 to 60 plus years of age or 28.8% of the members who responded. The 60 plus age range included 7 respondents (15.56%) and the 31 to 40 years of age range included 7 respondents (15.56%). The remaining 3 respondents were in the 20 to 30 years of age range (6.67%). Refer to Table 4.5, Age of Respondents.



Table 4.5  
Age of Respondents

Age	Number of Responses	Percent
20 to 30	3	6.67
31 to 40	7	15.56
41 to 50	15	33.33
51 to 60	13	28.89
60 plus	7	15.56
Total	45	100

Contribution of Business to Household Income

The majority of the respondents contribute fifty percent or less of the total household income. The numerical display of the data follows. Of the respondents, 34 (75.56%) indicated that their custom clothing home-based business provided between 0 to 25% of the total household income. Four respondents (8.89%) contributed 26% to 50% of the total household income. The remaining 7 respondents (15.56%) contributed over 50% of the total household income and included 3 respondents in the 51% to 75% category and 4 respondents in the 76% to 100% category. Refer to Table 4.6, Contribution of Household Income.

Table 4.6  
Total Contribution of Household Income of Respondents

Total Contribution of Household Income	Number of Responses	Percent
0 to 25%	34	75.56
26 to 50%	4	8.89
51 to 75%	3	6.67
76 to 100%	4	8.89
Total	45	100

Education Level of Respondents

The education level of the respondents ranged from high school to graduate/professional school. Six of the forty-five (13.33%) respondents had received a high school diploma as their highest level of

education. Fifteen (33.33%) of the respondents indicated that they had some college coursework. Twelve (26.67%) of the respondents had earned a four-year college degree. Six respondents had been to a technical trade school, received a trade certificate, or had attended post-bacc or graduate/professional school (13.34%). Two (4.44%) of the respondents indicated that they had a graduate or professional degree. Refer to Table 4.7, Education Level of Respondents.

Table 4.7  
Education Level of Respondents

Education	Number of Responses	Percent
High school diploma	6	13.33
Technical or Vocational school trade certificate	3	6.67
Community college degree	4	8.89
Some college coursework	15	33.33
Four-year college degree	12	26.67
Some post-bacc, graduate, or professional school	3	6.67
Graduate degree	2	4.44
Total	45	100

#### Technical Skills

The respondents were asked to describe their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills by checking all categories on item #26 that applied to them. The greatest percentage of the respondents 42 (93.33%) indicated that they acquired some of their skills at seminars/workshops. Thirty-one respondents (68.89%) selected high school as the second largest category. The respondents were also provided with an "other" category to list any means of acquiring their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern marking skills that were not listed on the questionnaire. The third largest category included 29 of the respondents indicating that their skills came from areas other than the items on the questionnaire. Thus, sixty-one percent of the respondents wrote in "other" choices, and of these 37.78% used self-taught/books to acquire some of their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills.

A category was included at the end of questionnaire item #26 to allow the respondents to select the overall most beneficial means of attaining their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills from

the choices listed. Seminars/workshops was the most frequently selected means of attaining their skills overall (51.51%). Refer to Table 4.8, Technical Skills.

Table 4.8  
Technical Skills

	Number of Responses <sup>1</sup>	Percent
<b>Dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making /design skills</b>		
High school	31	68.89
College	8	17.78
Community college	14	31.11
Trade school	3	6.67
Apprenticeship or employment	9	20
Parent or other family member	23	51.11
Seminars/workshops	42	93.33
Friend	14	31.11
Other <sup>a</sup>	29	62.22
<hr/>		
<sup>1</sup> More than one response could be indicated.		
<sup>a</sup> Other		
Self-taught/books	17	
4-H/ extension	5	
PACC seminars	3	
Weekly open dress class	1	
Middle school	1	
Custom clothier in high school	1	
Design school	1	
Total	29	

Objective 2:  
Marketing Strategies of the Respondents

The marketing strategies used by the custom clothier home-based business respondents were investigated in this survey. The strategies that were included in the investigation were: 1) the respondents' perceptions of their clientele's needs, 2) most effective selling points, 3) most effective methods of promotion, 4) most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price, 5) geographic range of clientele, and 6) most useful new product/technique information sources.

Perceived Needs of the Clientele

The respondents were asked to identify the greatest percentage of their business output in terms of product, service, or product and service combined. The majority of the respondents indicated that the greatest percentage of their business output was combined product and service (66.67%). Eleven of the respondents indicated that the greatest percentage of their business output was a service (24.44%). The four remaining respondents indicated that the greatest percentage of their business output was a product ((8.89%). Refer to Table 4.9 for the numerical display of greatest percentage of business output.

Table 4.9  
Greatest Percentage of Business Output

Output	Number of Responses	Percent
Product	4	8.89
Service	11	24.44
Product and Service	30	66.67
Total	45	100

The survey revealed that the respondents offered a variety of products/services to meet the perceived needs of the clientele. Garment construction from commercial patterns was ranked number one by ten of the respondents (26.32%). Alterations for styling changes was the next largest category selected by seven of the respondents as the perceived needs of the clientele. However, custom designs were ranked as number two by nine of the respondents as the most frequent client request. Only three respondents designated menswear as a request for their custom clothing skills and none of the respondents selected children's wear.

The respondents were allowed the option of writing in items that were not included on the questionnaire in an "other" category. Eleven of the respondents indicated that their clientele requested products/services not listed on the questionnaire such as sportswear, repair and alterations for theatre, production sewing, contract sewing, productions sewing for fiber artists, prom dresses, ready-to-wear retail, wearable art, leather repairs, pattern making and sample making, evening wear, finished garments

purchased at craft shows and sewing tours. Refer to Table 1 in Appendix B for a listing of products and services of respondents.

The respondents were asked to indicate if any of their product, service, or product/service combined was related to subcontract work. Nine respondents indicated that from .05 to 100 percent of their clientele requested their skills through sub-contract work such as production sewing or working for theaters. While the focus of the research was to investigate custom clothier home-based business owners, some of the custom clothiers in this study also did production sewing. The respondents were asked to list any products/services not offered through their business that was requested by their clientele. Bridal wear was the most frequent request indicated by six respondents. Pattern making was the second most frequently requested product/service by clientele that the respondents did not offer in their own business. Refer to Table 4.10, New Products/Services Requested by Clientele Not Offered By the Custom Clothier Home-Based Business Owner.

Table 4.10  
Products/Services Requested by Clientele  
Not Offered by the Custom Clothier Home-Based Business Owner

Products/Services	Number of Responses
Bridal Wear	6
Pattern Drafting/Pattern making	5
Menswear	4
General Alterations for Ready-to-Wear	3
Leather Sewing	2
Exotic Dancing Costumes	1
Tailored Suits	1
Monogramming	1
Custom Sewing	1
To Sell Patterns for our Products	1
To Make Complete Constructed Garments	1
Home Decorator Items	1
Fitting, Designing, Sewing, Teaching	1
Bathing Suits, Bras in Large Sizes of DD to J	1
Slacks or Skirts to go with their Jacket Products	1
Standard Garments with Fitting for Out-of-State Clients	1
Color Analysis	1
Fabric Inventory	1

### Most Effective Selling Points

The respondents were asked to describe the most effective selling points of their product, service, or product/service combined by checking all categories on item #9 that applied to them. Twenty-nine respondents (65.9%) indicated that the most effective selling point of custom sewing a product/service was high quality made better than a ready-to-wear garment. Nearly fifty-seven percent (56.82%) of the respondents selected the selling point of providing a product characteristic associated with custom clothing such as made-to-measure clothing (custom fit). Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that creating products/services for a specific product use such as bridal wear or skiwear was the most effective selling point for their products/services. The remaining choices that received 29.55%, 11.36%, and 9% responses respectively were 1) selling to a specific group such as career women, single men, or large sizes, 2) using natural fiber fabrics rather than fabrics made from manufactured fibers, and 3) competing directly head to head with another custom clothing competitor in the local area. An "other" category was included to allow the respondents to describe any selling points that were not listed on the questionnaire. Seven respondents (15.9%) indicated "other" responses than the choices included on the questionnaire as their most effective selling points. These responses included wearable art, working for a theatre, handcrafted or one-of-a-kind, alterations and draping, custom decorating, and production sewing items. Refer to Table 4.11 for a listing of the most effective selling points.

Table 4.11  
Most Effective Selling Points

Selling Point	Number Of Responses <sup>1</sup>	Percent <sup>2</sup>
Competing directly with another competitor in custom clothing who offers similar products or services as your own	4	9
A product characteristic associated with custom clothing such as made-to-measure clothing (custom fit)	25	56.82
A product or service of high quality made better than ready-to-wear	29	65.91
Creating products/services for a specific product use of custom clothing such as bridal or skiwear	22	50
Marketing to a specific group such as career women, women 55 and older, single men, large sizes	13	29.55
Using fabrics from natural fibers rather than fabrics from manufactured fibers such as leather or suede rather than Ultrasuede <sup>R</sup>	5	11.36
Other <sup>a</sup>	7	15.91

<sup>a</sup> other selling points include art to wear, working for a theater, production sewing, alterations and draping, custom decorating, and hand-crafted one-of-a-kind.

<sup>1</sup>n = 44, missing data=1

<sup>2</sup> more than response could be indicated

#### Most Challenging Aspect of Setting a Marketable Price

Smith (1984) stated that the most difficult problem faced by custom clothiers might be the issue of setting the price whether they are experienced or inexperienced business owners. The respondents were asked to rank order the following problems associated with setting a marketable price: 1) estimating time required to complete projects, 2) charging for labor, overhead, and materials, 3) working for friends and relatives, 4) feeling pressured when quoting prices, 5) charging more than estimated for additional cost of labor, selected fabrics, or notions, and 6) setting prices in relation to competitors' prices. Twenty (48.78%) of the respondents ranked estimating time required to complete projects as number one and ten (25%) ranked it as the second most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price. Friends and relatives as clientele was the second largest category ranked as number one by eight respondents (20%) as the most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price. Charging for labor, overhead, and materials was ranked

by 13 (32.50%) of the respondents as the third most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price. One respondent indicated that she found it difficult to find clientele willing to pay the higher prices for the quality of custom sewing as the most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price. Refer to Table 2 in Appendix B for a listing of challenging aspects of setting a marketable price.

#### Most Effective Methods of Promotion

The respondents were asked to indicate how effective the following fifteen methods of promotion were to their custom clothier home-based businesses: 1) business listings in yellow pages, 2) ad in local newspapers/neighborhood or local, 3) ad in trade magazines, 4) ad in trade newsletters, 5) business website/internet, 6) direct mailer/flyers/brochures sent to homes, 7) ad in catalogs (home-based business catalogs), 8) business cards, 9) sew in labels, 10) removable product hang tags, 11) trade shows, 12) craft fairs, 13) word-of-mouth, 14) networking in community, and 15) list in a referral book at a fabric store. An “other” category was also provided to allow the respondent to write in any methods of promotion that were effective in promoting their business. A five-point Likert scale was used to identify the most effective methods of promotion. Word-of-mouth was identified overwhelmingly on the Likert scale as the most effective method of promotion used by 31 (75.61%) of the respondents indicating that it was the primary means of promoting their business. Networking in the community was indicated as very effective in promoting the custom clothier’s home-based business by 14 (36.84%) of the respondents. Craft fairs or holiday markets received the second greatest percentage as being the most effective in promoting the custom clothier’s home-based business. However, craft fairs or holiday markets were only used by five of the forty-five respondents. Business cards was the method of promotion most frequently used by the entire group including forty-four of the forty-five respondents. Overall 31 (70.46%) of the respondents indicated that business cards ranged from very effective to somewhat effective in promoting their businesses. Nine respondents chose to write in their own most effective method of promotion in the “other” category and indicated that referrals from the PACC were the most effective method of promoting their business. Ads in trade newsletters and ads in home-based business catalogs were the least used methods of promotion by the respondents. Refer to Table 3 in Appendix B to find a listing of the most effective methods of promotion.

The respondents were asked to identify the single most effective promotion method from the list provided in questionnaire item #14 in promoting their business. Twenty-three (53.49%) identified word-of-



mouth as the most effective means of promoting their business. The second most frequently selected response was referrals in association with the PACC at fabric stores and in the yellow pages.

The respondents were also asked to indicate the most cost efficient method of promoting their business. Twenty-six (60.47%) indicated that word-of-mouth was the most cost efficient in promoting their business. Refer to Table 4.12 for a summary of the methods of promotion.

Table 4.12  
Methods of Promotion

Method of Promotion	Number	Percent <sup>2</sup> of Responses <sup>1</sup>
<b>Most Effective Method of Promotion</b>		
Word-of-Mouth	23	53.49
Referral in Association with PACC at Fabric Stores and in Yellow Pages	9	20.93
Networking with Community/PACC Members/ Fabric Stores	4	9.30
Trade Shows/High End Craft Shows	4	9.30
Ad in Oregon Cycle Magazine	1	2.32
Other Employment	1	2.32
Business Cards	1	2.32
Total	43	99.98
<b>Most Cost Efficient Method of Promotion</b>		
Word-of-Mouth	26	60.47
PACC Referral Service/Yellow Pages	5	11.63
Business Cards	5	11.63
Direct Market Shows	2	4.65
Networking	2	4.65
Other Employment	1	2.33
Direct Mail	1	2.33
Not Available	1	2.33
Total	43	100.02

<sup>1</sup> n=43, missing data=2

<sup>2</sup> Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

#### Geographic Range of Clientele

The respondents were asked to indicate the geographic range of their clientele by estimating the percent of clientele that were local (within a 50 mile radius of the business), statewide, northwest regional, national, and international. The majority of the respondents (53.33%) had clientele located within the 50-

mile radius of their business. The remainder of the respondents (46.67%) had clientele within the 50-mile radius of the home as well as outside the 50-mile radius of the home. One respondent had clientele statewide, four of the respondents served clientele located in the northwest region, twelve of the respondents had clientele located nationally, and two respondents had clientele located internationally. Of the respondents who had clientele outside the local area five had clientele of 70% or more that were non-local. Refer to Table 4.13 for a numerical display of the geographic range of clientele.

Table 4.13  
Geographic Range of Clientele

Range	Responses <sup>1</sup>
<b>Local Clientele Only</b>	
100% Local	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Local, and Statewide Clientele</b>	
95% Local    5% Statewide	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Local, Statewide, and Northwest Regional Clientele</b>	
99% Local                      1% Northwest Regional	1
95% Statewide                      5% Northwest Regional	1
95% Local                      5% Northwest Regional	1
90% Local                      10% Northwest Regional	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Local, Statewide, Northwest Regional, and National Clientele</b>	
99% Local    1% National	3
95% Local    5% National	1
90% Local    8% Statewide                      1% Northwest Regional                      1% National	1
90% Local    10% National	1
80% Local    20% National	1
70% Local    10% Northwest Regional                      20% National	1
40% Local    50% Northwest Regional                      10% National	1
20% Local    5% Northwest Regional                      75% National	1
20% Local    80% National	1
5% Local    95% National	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Local, Statewide, Northwest Regional, National, and International Clientele</b>	
80% Local 10% Statewide 6% Northwest Regional 3% National 1% International	1
75% Local 15% Statewide    10% International	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> n = 43, missing data=2

Farthest geographic range is listed in bold.

The respondents who had clientele located outside the local area were asked to describe why they market beyond the local area. Five of the respondents' clientele were either relatives located outside the local area or they have clientele that remained in their professional lives either because the respondent had

moved or the client had moved. Five of the respondents indicated that they received requests for their products/services beyond the local area by word-of-mouth. Some of the requests include custom sewing non-standard sizes, sewing for special needs people or sewing special items such as costumes. Three of the respondents indicated that they needed to locate clientele outside of the local area and of these three one stated that clients were willing to pay higher prices outside of her local area. Three of the respondents indicated that they found clientele through their own sewing fashion tours, high end craft shows, and/or state craft shows. One respondent wrote articles and taught outside the local area. One of the respondents that has clientele located in the local area only indicated that she received requests from local bridal parties to produce custom clothing for members of the party that are not local. Refer to Table 4.14 for a display of reasons for marketing outside the local area.

Table 4.14  
Reasons for Marketing Outside the Local Area

Reason	Number of Responses
Requests for Services Outside the Local Area for Non-Standard Sizes, Special Needs, and Special Items Such as Costumes	5
Relatives or Clients Remain in Professional Life When Residence Changes for the Custom Clothier or Client	5
To Obtain More Business or Clients were Willing to Pay More Outside the Local Area	3
Sewing Fashion Tours/High End Craft Shows-Designing Garments/State Craft Shows	3
Teach and Write Articles	1

#### Most Useful New Product/Technique Information Sources

Nineteen of the forty-five (42.22%) respondents indicated that they were sometimes asked to use new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings that they had not worked with before (42.22%). The respondents were asked to rank order how useful the following sources of new product/technique information were to them: trade magazines, workshops/seminars, community college/university

course/workshops/seminars, suppliers, sales associates at fabric stores, sewing exhibitions, professional organizations, state extension publications, and television programs. Three of the listed sources, workshops/seminars, professional organizations, and trade magazines were selected overall as useful for new product/technique development. Two of the sources, workshops/seminars and professional organizations, were each ranked number one by twelve of the respondents. Trade magazines was the other source ranked as number one by eleven of the respondents as the most useful source to provide ideas for new product/techniques. Sources that received low rankings or were seldom selected were sales associates at fabric stores, state extension publications, and television programs as are shown in Table 4 in Appendix B, New Product/Technique Information Sources. Examining Table 4 shows that these three sources of new product/technique development received only one rank individually by three respondents.

### Objective 3: Current Marketing Support From the PACC Organization

The PACC offered a variety of marketing support opportunities for its members. These included sharing of business card ideas, pricing strategies workshops, networking opportunities, a local newsletter, a national newsletter, and referrals in the yellow pages and at fabric stores in association with the PACC after the member's work is critiqued by a board of PACC members. The marketing support sponsored by the PACC allows the members to be associated with publicity in newspapers, advertisement in fashion magazines, and sewing magazines, a web page at the national level, and product/service development at meetings. This study revealed that 68.29% of the respondents (28) selected product/service development at meetings as a very beneficial means of marketing support from the PACC organization. The second most frequently selected item of marketing support that was very beneficial to the respondents was networking (53.66%). Pricing strategies was also selected as of a means of marketing support to the respondents that was indicated to be very beneficial to their businesses (46.51%). One member rated the PACC publicity for the organization as very beneficial. The study revealed that many of the respondents had not used the referral system offered by the PACC. As was described in Chapter 3 Method, the members have the opportunity to have their product, service, or product/service critiqued by a board of the PACC members. Nearly thirty-eight percent (37.78%) had not been listed on the referral list at fabric stores in association with the PACC and 28.89% had not been listed on the referral list in the yellow pages in association with

the PACC. The majority of the respondents rated neither the local nor the national newsletter as being very beneficial for marketing support. Refer to Table 5 in Appendix B to see a listing of current marketing support by the PACC organization.

The respondents were also asked to select the most beneficial item of marketing support that they receive from the PACC organization. Networking was the item most frequently indicated by 14 (31%) of the respondents.

#### Objective 4: Potential Future Marketing Support

Of the forty-five respondents, only twenty chose to describe ideas for potential future marketing support. Of the twenty that responded to questionnaire item #20, the most frequent response was to be listed on the PACC referral list in the yellow pages and at fabric stores. One member commented that residing more than 80 miles from the Portland area is a drawback to the referral service. The second most frequent suggestion was to create more publicity for the PACC. Suggestions were flyers, newspaper reminder ads, and developing a slide show about the PACC. The remaining comments suggested more networking, more exposure at the national level, some classes on marketing education, a printed list of all members' prices, gaining more new members, members from the PACC speaking to professional women's groups and to brides and mothers of brides about the quality of custom work and working with a dressmaker. One member suggested that PACC continue with all the current marketing support that is already offered. Refer to Table 4.15 for a display of ideas for potential future marketing support.

Table 4.15  
Ideas for Potential Future Marketing Support

Ideas	Number of Responses
Referral list	7
Publicity in newspaper, flyer, magazines, newspaper reminder ads slide show	6
Education classes on marketing	1
Printed list of all members prices	1
Continue networking support	1
More national exposure and new members	1
Referral service living more than 80 miles away is a drawback	1
PACC may be limited if company enlarges to a corporation	1
Speakers to brides and mothers of brides or to womens groups about custom fit	1
Continue all current marketing support	1
Didn't know	6
No response	18
	Total 45

Six of the members indicated that they belonged to other organizations that offered them marketing support. The other organizations mentioned were Bead Society, American Sewing Guild, Beta X Sorority, church/school, Local #14 (a group of women artisans), a group of friends who meet once a week to discuss art and their work, Saturday Market, Leads, and Soroptimist Club.

**Objective Five:  
Comparison of the Members Who Had Marketing Experience and/or Education to the Members Who Had Not Had Marketing Experience and/or Education**

In this section the column factor of marketing experience and/or education was compared to four selected row factors of 1) geographic range of clientele, 2) number of competitors in the local area, 3) requests for new fabrics, embellishments, and interfacings, and 4) satisfaction of level of profits from the business. These row factors were compared to assess Objective 5. Marketing experience and/or education was identified using nominal data, "yes" or "no" from the responses. The respondents were divided into two populations of either having marketing experience and/or education or not having marketing experience and/or education. The column and row factors were compared to identify if the two populations of those who had marketing experience and/or education and those who had not had marketing experience and/or education were homogeneous or similar when compared to the row factors of: 1) geographic range of clientele, 2) number of competitors in the local area, 3) requests for new fabrics, embellishments, and interfacings, and 4) satisfaction of level of profits from the business.

Eleven of the 45 respondents from this survey indicated that they had marketing experience and/or education (24.44%). Fisher's Exact Test with two-by-two tables was used to assess the comparisons in Objective 5. As discussed in Chapter 3, a significance level of .05 was used to identify if there was any homogeneity in the analysis. The level of significance at .05 identified that finding a p-value as extreme or more extreme will be incorrect only one in twenty times.

**Geographic Range of Clientele**

The row factor of geographic range of clientele was selected to identify if there was any association with the column factor of marketing experience and/or education. The respondents were divided into two categories of a) either local and with clientele within a 50-mile radius of their business or b) outside the local area and with clientele located outside the 50-mile radius of their business. Twenty-four (53.33%) of the respondents indicated that their clientele were within a 50-mile radius of their home. The column factor compared the proportions of the respondents 1) who had marketing experience and/or education to the proportions of respondents 2) who had not had marketing experience and/or education in relation to the row factor of geographic range of clientele. Fisher's Exact Test, as described in Chapter 3, revealed a significant difference of a two-sided p-value of .027. The proportions of the respondents



indicated in the two-by-two table were not likely due to chance. There was an association between the row factor of geographic range and the column factor of marketing. The two populations were not homogeneous when comparing the column factor of marketing experience and/or education and the row factor of geographic range of clientele. Further analysis using the one-sided p-value of .0156 from Fisher's Exact Test identified that respondents who had marketing experience and/or education were more likely to have clientele located outside the local area of their business. Fisher's Exact Test examined all possible assignments of the column factor of marketing and the row factor of geographic range and found that only 1.56% of them resulted in a difference as great as the one observed. Refer to Table 4.16 for the results of the comparison of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education to geographic range.

**Table 4.16**  
Comparison of Respondents Who had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had not had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Geographic Range

Marketing Strategy	Fisher's Exact Value <sup>2</sup>	Marketing Experience And/Or Education Yes	Marketing Experience And/Or Education No	Total
		Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency
<b>Geographic range<sup>1</sup></b>				
Outside a 50 mile radius of the home business	.027	80 8	35.29 12	45.45 20
Within a 50 mile radius of the home business		20 2	64.71 22	54.55 24

<sup>1</sup> n=44, missing data = 1

<sup>2</sup> two sided p-value

A significance level of .05 was used.

#### Number of Competitors in the Local Area

The row factor of number of competitors in the local area was compared in association to the column factor of marketing experience and/or education. The respondents indicated that 60% had four or

more competitors within a 50-mile radius of the home-based business. The data were collapsed in order to form a two-by-two table. Combining the respondents who had two, three, or four or more competitors into one cell and comparing it to the remaining cell of zero to one competitor collapsed the data. The proportions of the two groups of those who had marketing experience and/or education was compared to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education in relation to two categories of the number of competitors: 1) zero to one competitor was compared to 2) two or more competitors. Analysis of the two by two table with Fisher's Exact Test revealed no significance with a two-sided p-value greater than .05. The two separate groups of respondents who have either had marketing experience and/or education or had not had marketing experience and/or education were similar or homogeneous in proportions. There was no association between the column factor of marketing experience and/or education and the row factor of number of competitors in the local area. Refer to Table 4.17 for a display of the comparison of the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education to the number of competitors in the local area.

**Table 4.17**  
**Comparison of Respondents Who had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had not had Marketing Experience and/or Education to the Number of Competitors in the Local Area**

Marketing Strategy	Fisher's Exact Value <sup>2</sup>	Marketing Experience And/Or Education Yes	Marketing Experience And/Or Education No	Total
		Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency
<b>Competitors<sup>1</sup></b>				
0 to 1 competitors	1.00	20	16.13	17.07
		<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
		2	5	7
2 to 3 competitors		30	12.90	17.07
		<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>
4 or more competitors		50	70.97	65.85
		<u>5</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>27</u>
		8	26	34

<sup>1</sup>n=41, missing data=4

<sup>2</sup> two sided p-value

A significance level of .05 was used.

#### Requests for New Fabrics, Embellishments, or Interfacings

The column factor of marketing experience and/or education was compared in association to the row factor of requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings. The survey results indicated that 42.22% of the respondents did get requests for new fabrics, embellishments, and interfacings. However, after analyzing the data there were no significant differences identified between the proportions of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education and the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education in association to the row factor of requests for new fabrics, embellishments, and interfacings. Fisher's Exact Test revealed a two-sided p-value greater than .05. The proportions of the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education was homogeneous to the proportions of respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education in comparison to the row factor of requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings. There was no association between

marketing experience and/or education and requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings. Refer to Table 4.18 for a numerical display of the comparison of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to those respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education in association to the row factor of requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.

Table 4.18

Comparison of Respondents Who had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had not had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Requests for New Fabrics, Embellishments, or Interfacings

Marketing Strategy	Fisher's Exact Value <sup>1</sup>	Marketing Experience And/Or Education Yes	Marketing Experience And/Or Education No	Total
		Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency	

**Requests for New Fabrics, Embellishments, or Interfacings  
(New Product/Technique Development)**

Sometimes asked for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.

Yes	.30	27.27 3	47.06 16	42.22 19
No		72.73 8	52.94 18	57.78 26

n=45

<sup>1</sup> A two-sided p-value was used.

A significance level of .05 was used.

**Satisfaction With the Level of Profits from the Business**

The row factor of satisfaction with the level of profits from the business was compared to the column factor of marketing experience and/or education to identify if there was any association or if the two groups of either 1) having marketing experience and/or education and 2) those who had not had marketing experience and/or education were homogeneous. Satisfaction of level of profits from the business was indicated on the questionnaire with either a "yes" or "no" response. Of the forty-five respondents, 33 (75%) indicated that they were not satisfied with the level of profits from their businesses.

Fisher's Exact Test revealed a two-sided p-value greater than .05 and identified no significance differences in the proportions of those who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education in association with satisfaction of level of profits from the business. The proportions of the two groups were considered to be homogeneous. Refer to Table 4.19 for a display of the comparison of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education.

Table 4.19

Comparison of Respondents Who had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had not had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Satisfaction With the Level of Profits

Marketing Strategy	Fisher's Exact Value <sup>2</sup>	Marketing Experience And/Or Education Yes	Marketing Experience And/Or Education No	Total
		Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency	Percent Frequency
<b>Satisfaction with Level of Profits<sup>1</sup></b>				
Satisfied with level of profits from the business				
Yes	1.00	27.27 3	24.24 8	25 11
No		72.73 8	75.76 25	75 33

<sup>1</sup>n=44, missing data=1

<sup>2</sup>Two-sided p-value was used  
A significance level of .05 was used.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to investigate the marketing strategies of custom clothing home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC at the time of the study. The format of the research was based on a past study completed by Duggan in 1988 that focused on the marketing strategies of home-based textile related product owners.

### Summary

Five objectives were developed to achieve the purpose of this study investigating the demographic characteristics, marketing strategies, current and potential future marketing support of the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers, and comparing the members who had marketing experience and/or education with the members who had not had marketing experience and/or education. The objectives were as follows:

1. To describe selected demographics of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC.
2. To identify marketing strategies of custom clothier home-based business owners who were members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC in terms of:
  - a) ascertaining the perceived needs of the custom clothier's clientele
  - b) the most effective selling points
  - c) setting a marketable price
  - d) identifying the most effective methods of promotion
  - e) identifying the geographic range of clientele
  - f) ascertaining the main sources of useful new product information
3. To identify current marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.
4. To identify potential future marketing support from the PACC that members perceived as beneficial to their businesses.

5. To compare the marketing strategies of members who had marketing experience and/or education to those members who had not had marketing experience and/or education in terms of:
  - (a) The members whose clientele is within a 50 mile radius of their home to those whose clientele is outside the 50 mile radius of their home.
  - (b) The custom clothier who has between 0 to 1, 2 to 3, and 4 or more competitors within a 50 mile radius of their home.
  - (c) The custom clothier whose clientele requests new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings to the custom clothier whose clientele does not request new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.
  - (d) The custom clothier who is satisfied with their level of profits from the business to the custom clothier who is not satisfied with the level of profits from the business.

The sample for the research consisted of members of the Oregon Chapter of PACC who owned home-based custom clothier businesses. Questionnaires were mailed to all 82 members. Only those who owned a custom clothier home-based business were asked to participate.

Of the 82 questionnaires that were mailed, 69 were returned. Forty-five of the returned questionnaires were identified as useable for the analysis. The final response rate calculation for the study was 69%.

The selected demographic characteristics revealed that 33.33% of the respondents were in the age category of 41 to 50 years of age. Eighty percent of the respondents had belonged to the Oregon Chapter of PACC for three years or more and four respondents indicated that they were charter members of the PACC organization. The number of years the custom clothier home-based business owners had owned their businesses varied from 8 months to 35 years. The greatest percentage of the respondents had owned their businesses for 12 years (13.33%). The majority (84.44%) of the respondents contribute fifty percent or less of the total household income. The respondents' level of education ranged from high school to graduate/professional school. Some college coursework was the largest category selected by 33.33% of the

respondents as the highest level of education. The respondents who participated were asked to describe where they attained their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills. The majority (93.33%) indicated that seminars/workshops were where they had attained some of their skills. High school was the second largest response with 68.89% of the respondents selecting it as a means of attaining their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills. Surprisingly 37.78% of the respondents indicated that they attained their dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills by self-teaching and books. Overall the most frequently selected item for the respondents to have attained their skills was from workshops/seminars.

The most frequently requested needs of the clientele as perceived by the respondents were identified as garment construction from commercial patterns, alterations for styling changes, and custom designs. The most effective selling points for the custom clothier's products/services were a product/service of high quality that is made better than ready-to-wear, a product characteristic associated with custom clothing such as made-to-measure clothing (custom fit), and creating products/services for a specific product use of custom clothing such as bridal wear or skiwear. The respondents indicated that the most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price was estimating time required to complete projects. Word-of-mouth was identified as the most effective method of promotion for the custom clothier's home-based business. The majority of the respondents (53.33%) had clientele located only within a 50-mile radius of the business. One respondent had clientele located geographically within the 50-mile radius and statewide. Four of the respondents had extended the geographic range of their clientele to the northwest region. Twelve of the respondents had clientele located nationally and two respondents had international clientele. The major sources indicated by the respondents for new product/technique development were workshops/seminars, professional organizations, and trade magazines.

A Likert scale identified product/service development as a very beneficial means of marketing support derived from the PACC organization (68.29%). The respondents were also asked to select the item of marketing support they receive from the PACC organization that is the most beneficial in promoting their business. Networking was identified as the most beneficial marketing support by 31% of the respondents (14).



An open-ended question identified the referral list from the PACC and publicity as potential areas of marketing support that would benefit the members in their businesses. Suggestions to increase publicity included flyers, newspaper reminder ads, and development of a slide show about the PACC.

A significant difference was found by comparing the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to the members who had not had marketing experience and/or education regarding whether their clientele was located within a 50-mile radius of their business or farther away. Fisher's Exact test revealed a .05 level of significance. There was not homogeneity or the populations were not equal when the column factor of marketing experience and/or education and the row factor of having clientele within or outside the 50-mile radius were compared.

There was no significant difference between the proportions of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education and the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education in terms of 0 to 1 competitors and 2 to 4 or more competitors. There populations were homogeneous or equal when comparing the column factor of marketing experience and/or education and the row factor of number of competitors.

The proportions of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education was compared to the proportions of respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education in relation to the row factor of requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings. A significance level greater than .05 was found and revealed that the populations were equal when comparing those who had marketing experience and/or education to those who had not had marketing experience and/or education in relation to getting requests for new fabrics, embellishments, or interfacings.

The respondents were asked to indicate if they were satisfied with the level of profits from their business by replying "yes" or "no". The row factor considered was satisfaction with the level of profits from the business and was compared to the column factor of marketing experience and/or education. Fisher's Exact Test revealed that there was no significance difference with a two-sided p-value greater than .05. The proportions of the respondents who had marketing experience and/or education was not significantly different than the proportions of the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education.

## Conclusions

The marketing of the custom clothier home-based business is a competitive and complex process. The custom clothing home-based business owner is faced with many tasks including creating the marketing mix of product, price, place, and promotion and locating a target market with limited resources. The major products/services produced by the custom clothier were made-to-measure garments or altered ready-to-wear that are fit to an individual's specifications.

This study was conducted to investigate the marketing strategies of the custom clothier home-based business owners who were members affiliated with the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers. Along with marketing strategies used by the PACC members, the members were asked to rate the marketing support they perceive as beneficial from the PACC organization and to list any ideas for potential future marketing support that might be beneficial in marketing their custom clothier home-based businesses. The following six sections: 1) Promotion, 2) Most Challenging Aspect of Setting a Marketable Price, 3) Current and Potential Future Marketing Support From the PACC Organization, 4) Comparison of Members Who Had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had Not Had Marketing Experience and/or Education, 5) Compilation of Studies for Future Reference, and 6) Discussion of the Questionnaire were the selected topics for discussion of the conclusions of this study.

### Promotion

In a previous study Duggan (1988) identified that the most important method of promotion for the textile-related home-based business owners was word-of-mouth communication. Word-of-mouth promotion was confirmed to be the most effective method of promotion for the custom clothiers' businesses in the current study. This agrees with Wilke's (1994) conclusion that due to increased risk involved in the consumption of services or custom produced products consumers do rely heavily on word-of-mouth communication from friends or on the reputation of the service provider to decide if they might use the product/service of the business owner.

Word-of-mouth in this study inevitably included referrals from fellow PACC members for the clientele to other business associates if the client wanted a product/service not provided by the member. The PACC has a referral service through the yellow pages and at fabric stores for members who qualify to be on the referral list. Due to the number of competitors that many of the respondents indicated they have

within a 50-mile radius, further research could examine the possibility of other stores that might be a beneficial means of referrals such as alterations for retail apparel stores. Retail apparel stores might need an outlet for referral of their customers to have alteration work completed or a garment made to measure that is not available in ready-to-wear. A more in depth look at word-of-mouth promotion might be of assistance to the respondents in this study as word-of-mouth promotion was the most effective method of promoting their businesses. A possibility for future research might be the investigation of incentives for clientele that assist with word-of-mouth promotion.

#### Most Challenging Aspect of Setting a Marketable Price

The most challenging aspect of setting a marketable price was identified to be estimating time required to complete a project. This might be due to a variety of reasons associated with custom clothing such as time-consuming techniques or unexpected challenges used for special fabrics, family considerations, organization and use of office space, last minute demands of clientele, and difficulty in maintaining production times for projects due to unanticipated circumstances. Overall, the complex area of pricing of the custom clothier's products/services is clearly an opportunity to be investigated for further research. This might be an area that needs further investigation by the PACC. Topics of interest could be client contracts and policies, reprice quotation, and revisions in original specifications for orders.

#### Current and Potential Future Marketing Support From the PACC Organization

In a study of home-based sewing businesses in Mississippi, Duncan (1991) concluded that marketing support of the custom clothier home-based businesses might require further investigation. Duncan's study recommended identifying and analyzing the specific kinds of assistance that is offered by support groups for custom clothiers. The PACC organization is an organization for the members to develop and maintain their knowledge for products/service skills. The respondents identified the PACC to be a beneficial source of networking. Respondents indicated that the referral service might be of potential future marketing support to those members who are not already utilizing its benefits. Although, some of the members might be located outside the Portland Metropolitan area and the referral list may not directly be of assistance to their business, having their work critiqued by fellow members of a profession can be a selling point for a product/service.

Other potential future marketing support that might be offered by the PACC could involve more publicity. Publicity for this organization as a whole might be a challenging task. The respondents offer a variety of products/services including the top three categories of garments from commercial patterns, alterations for style changes, and custom designs. The respondents indicated that the more publicity in the newspaper such as a reminder ad (in the Sunday newspaper), or more publicity through a flyer, magazines, or a slide show might be potential means of future marketing support for the PACC organization.

Of these suggestions a flyer might be the least expensive. It could explain to potential clients what the referral service is for the PACC and why it would be valuable to them. The flyer's could be placed in fabric stores, libraries, or the chamber of commerce. Promotion through publicity for the PACC targeting potential new members could be done through magazine articles submitted to issues of Threads or Sew News discussing new product techniques or ideas the members have discovered that are more efficient for use in their business.

A slide show or video could be produced that would target potential new members. A slide show could be produced to target potential new clients also. Slide shows or videos could be targeted to two different clients: 1) to acquaint the general public about products/services of the custom clothier such as taking body specifications and measurements, adjusting patterns to fit the individual precisely, or adapting styles, 2) to acquaint potential clientele with the products/services that are available by the PACC members such as bridal, alterationists, evening wear, sportswear, etc. For the latter group, sewing fairs or expositions are possible venues. For the general public, professional organizations such as the American Association of University of Women or the American Society of Interior Designers are possible venues.

Another possibility of creating more publicity could include expanding the national web page on the Internet. The national organization of the PACC currently advertises through a web page about its organization, however, it might need to be more directed toward the general public. A web page might be created that is more regional with a link to the national web page.

#### Comparison of Members Who Had Marketing Experience and/or Education to Those Who Had Not Had Marketing Experience and/or Education

Overall the geographic range of clientele for the custom clothier home-based business owner in this study was local. However, as in Duggan's (1988) study of textile-related home-based business owners

some of the custom clothiers in this study also have clientele located as far away as international. In comparing the proportions of respondents who had marketing experience and/or education to the respondents who had not had marketing experience and/or education only one significant difference was identified. The row factor of geographic range of clientele revealed a significant difference between the two populations of respondents. The respondents who had marketing experience and/or education were more inclined to have clientele outside the designated local area of a 50-mile radius of the home.

Satisfaction of the level of profits was homogeneous between the two populations of either had marketing experience and/or education or not had marketing experience and/or education. However, 75% of the respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with the level of profits. The indicator for satisfaction with the level of profits from the business in this survey was a nominal response of "yes" or "no". This was a very basic form of measuring the respondents' satisfaction with the level of profits from the business. Further research investigation of the satisfaction of level of profits with the possibility of suggestions for using a more complex measure, varying current strategies for marketing, the need for more marketing, or investigating other areas related to the business such as whether it is a part-time or full time occupation, might be topics to be examined in the future.

#### Compilation of Studies for Future Reference

This study has compiled a number of marketing strategies from scholarly journals and secondary sources that are directly related to custom clothing home-based businesses. Terminology has been interpreted from large business functions to home-based small business functions. Examples have been provided to describe the various marketing strategies. The results of this study and the list of references might be of assistance to people who are considering starting a custom clothing home-based business or to those who already are managing a custom clothing home-based business.

#### Discussion of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire for this study was an adaptation of the questionnaire Duggan (1988) used to analyze the marketing strategies of textile-related home-based business owners. Therefore, although parts of the questionnaire instrument had been tested, some of the content in this instrument was new and had not been tested across subgroups.

### Questionnaire Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire describes the ability of the study to produce the same results over and over. The reliability of the questionnaire used in the current study might be questioned regarding the following questionnaire items of 7, and #12 (refer to questionnaire in Appendix A). The difficulty of questionnaire items #7 and #12 appeared to be with asking the respondents to rank order their responses. Questionnaire item #7 appeared to have caused more difficulty than questionnaire item #12. Not only did respondents who were included in the forty-five useable questionnaire category have difficulty with questionnaire item #7, which is shown in Table 1A of Appendix B titled With All Responses Including Respondents Who Identified the Perceived Needs of Clientele But Didn't Rank Them, but this was also a problem associated with the five unuseable questionnaires that answered less than 75% of the total questionnaire items. A possible solution for future use of the questionnaire items might be to bold the directions of rank order, so the respondents will easily be able to know how to respond.

Another issue that needs to be discussed concerning the questionnaires reliability would be over questionnaire items #14 and #17. Both involved the use of a lengthy Likert Scale. Every now and then a respondent forgot to mark a response in a row. This might be due to the confusion of lengthy amount of rows and columns. Excluding the numbers and possibly using shaded zones to display the values of the Likert Scale might be a solution to this situation.

### Questionnaire Validity

The questionnaire could produce the same results over and over, but the data obtained and information learned might not be valid. The validity of the questionnaire describes the ability of the questionnaire to actually measure the concepts that the study was designed for. An example from McDaniel and Gates (1996) provides an example of a study that was not valid even though it involved the use of 5000 respondents. Coke developed a new product called "new Coke" based on the information obtained from the 5000 respondents in interviews that revealed that they preferred "new Coke" to the traditional Coke product. However, the measurement instrument was not valid and led to a marketing research disaster since people did not prefer "new Coke" to the more traditional Coke product.

Face or content validity of the questionnaire instrument might be obscure on two questionnaire items of #12 and #14. Questionnaire item #12 might have had some overlapping or a form of multicollinearity as described by Ramsey and Schafer (1997) with the category of community college/university courses/seminars/workshops. Multicollinearity refers to two explanatory variables having a direct correlation and causing conflict with the measurement of the response variable. No category was specifically designed to allow the respondents to select seminars/workshops through the PACC organization. There might have been some confusion over whether the response category was referring to seminars/workshops offered through the PACC or elsewhere. As shown in Table 4 of Appendix B, New Product/Technique Information Sources, some of the respondents wrote in seminars/workshops offered by the PACC in the "other" category.

Questionnaire item #14 might have been confusing to the respondents regarding the issue of the word-of-mouth communication and the referral service from the PACC. The referral service from the PACC encourages the members to have their work critiqued, as mentioned previously, to be included on a referral list at fabric stores and in the yellow pages in association with the PACC. However, the respondents were asked to rate word-of-mouth communication, which might also include referrals from fellow PACC members, as being "very effective" to not "very effective". Referrals from the yellow pages and at fabric stores might in time lead to word-of-mouth communication. This could be an example of multicollinearity as mentioned previously, or a confounding variable as in this example when the referrals could be related to both group membership in the survey and to the identification of the most effective method of promotion. However, as has been identified in previous studies, word-of-mouth communication is generally used as a method of promotion. As shown in Table 3 in Appendix B, some of the respondents chose to write in the PACC referral service in the "other" category.

#### Nonresponse Bias and Omitted Data

As was shown in Table 4.1, thirty-one percent of the total possible useable questionnaires that met the criterion of the study were not useable. Of these twelve were not returned, two did not wish to participate, five were identified as unuseable, and one undeliverable in the mail.

Nonresponse Bias. The question of nonresponse bias, a situation when the subject cannot be contacted or refuses to participate, concerns whether the questionnaires that were not included in the analysis and considered unuseable could affect the overall results (Moore and McCabe, 1993) The second and third mailing resulted in return of many questionnaires from respondents who did not meet the criteria of the survey. See Table 6 in Appendix B, Return of Questionnaires. Therefore, the remaining unreturned questionnaires from the survey might be from possible respondents who did not meet the criterion of the study, also. It is possible that the issue of nonresponse bias in this survey is very slight if at all.

Omitted Data. Omitted data is not an unusual part of survey research. Either the researcher has the option of filling in the missing data or leaving the item blank and reporting it as missing data (Neuman, 1997). In the current study, the omitted data was left out and designated as missing data. Therefore, the reader has the opportunity to examine the tables and analyze the questionnaire items with the missing data on the questionnaires that were identified as useable. Questionnaires that had omitted 75% or more of the data were identified as unuseable.

### Scope of Inference

As was stated previously in Chapter 3, the Method Chapter, this study was a nonprobability sample. Therefore, no causal conclusions could be identified and no inferences could be made to a larger population. The information obtained from this survey only relates to the custom clothier home-based business owners who are affiliated as members of the Oregon Chapter of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers.

### Recommendations for Further Study

The recommendations from this study are numerous. The custom clothing home-based business owner has many hurdles to overcome in order to maintain and/or expand the business. The recommendations from this study for further investigation focus on word-of-mouth promotion, the issue of pricing in relation to estimating time to complete projects, and satisfaction with the level of profits from the business.

The first recommendation would be to examine the word-of-mouth communication as a method of promotion more in depth. The custom clothier who is just starting the business or the custom clothier who



relocates to a new area has to create word-of-mouth promotion. Negative word-of-mouth communication is also an issue faced by the business owner. The two kinds of referrals associated with word-of-mouth communication are those from business associates and those from clients, friends, and family. These two types of word-of-mouth communication could possibly be a topic for examination in future research. A study might also be completed that investigates word-of-mouth referrals for an entire organization and its influence on the members.

The second recommendation is associated with the area of pricing. The area of pricing strategies for the custom clothier home-based business owner was a complex issue and would be a research topic for further study. A study might focus on further research in examining the difficulty of projects completed by the custom clothiers in terms of levels of skills, textile knowledge, design knowledge, and fitting knowledge. The subject of contracts between client and business owner could be investigated as it is related to the issue of the difficulty of estimating time required to complete projects.

The third recommendation regards the issue of the satisfaction with the level of profits from the business. Satisfaction with the level of profits might be associated with a variety of issues. Satisfaction of the level of profits from the business could be explored at the exploratory level (e.g. answering the “what” are custom clothiers’ satisfaction of levels of profits from the business, descriptive level (e.g. answering the “how” are custom clothiers’ satisfied with the level of profits from the business, or explanatory level (e.g. answering the “why” are custom clothiers’ satisfied with the level of profits from the business. Factors that might be investigated in relation to satisfaction of the level of profits from the business are: the custom clothier’s expectations of the business such as full-time work, part-time work, the number of hours worked per week, family considerations, and personality traits.

A fourth recommendation would be to complete a follow up study of the Oregon Chapter of PACC a year after distributing the results of this study. It would be interesting to determine whether some of the members have changed or adapted their marketing strategies after participation in the present survey. A focus group could be used to gather more data about marketing strategies of the home-based custom clothier.

The fifth recommendation would be a national study of the PACC members comparing the respondents on a regional or nationwide basis. A national study could identify if the marketing strategies

vary from state to state or region to region. This study might be beneficial to the state organizations to assist their members as well as to the national organization of PACC. A further study could investigate the possibility of other groups forming liaisons with the PACC or investigating other women's networking organizations and the marketing support they offer.

The final recommendation would be to conduct a survey of the clientele of home-based custom clothiers. A survey could analyze the clientele of the home-based custom clothier's regarding their perceived needs of custom clothing products/services, pricing issues, the place or accessible distribution channels, and effective means of promotion that communicate the products/services of the home-based custom clothiers.

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**Questionnaire and Cover Letters**



**Questionnaire**

1. Do you own a home-based custom clothing business?

YES

NO-----Thank you for your time. You do not need to answer any other questions. Please mail the questionnaire using the enclosed postage paid envelope.

2. How long have you owned your custom clothing business?

3. What metropolitan area is closest to your business?

4. How many years have you been a member of the PACC?

**MARKETING INFORMATION**

5. What percentage of your clientele are within a 50 mile radius of your local area?

\_\_\_\_\_

Could you provide the percentage of the remainder of your clientele that are:

STATE-WIDE	_____
NORTHWEST REGIONAL	_____
NATIONAL	_____
INTERNATIONAL	_____
TOTAL	100%

6. If you have any clients beyond your local area, what are your reasons for marketing to areas other than the local home-based business?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the most frequent request from your clientele for your custom sewing skills? Please rank your top three choices in order from 1 (first and most frequent) to 3 (third).

- \_\_\_ CUSTOM DESIGNS
- \_\_\_ ALTERATIONS FOR STYLING CHANGES  
(NARROWING LAPELS, SHORTENING OR LENGTHENING HEMS, CHANGING NECKLINES).
- \_\_\_ ALTERATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS  
(SIZING, MATERNITY, HANDICAPPED).
- \_\_\_ BRIDAL WEAR
- \_\_\_ CHILDREN'S WEAR
- \_\_\_ MENSWEAR
- \_\_\_ TEACHING COURSES/SEMINARS
- \_\_\_ NON-APPAREL PRODUCTS OR SERVICES
- \_\_\_ GARMENT CONSTRUCTION FROM COMMERCIAL PATTERNS
- \_\_\_ OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

8. List any products or services that are requested by your clientele that you do not offer.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Of the following selling points that might be used to market your product/services which have you found the most effective. (Circle all that apply).

1. COMPETING DIRECTLY WITH ANOTHER COMPETITOR IN CUSTOM CLOTHING WHO OFFERS SIMILAR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES AS YOUR OWN.
2. A PRODUCT CHARACTERISTIC ASSOCIATED WITH CUSTOM CLOTHING SUCH AS MADE-TO-MEASURE CLOTHING (CUSTOM FIT).
3. A PRODUCT OR SERVICE OF HIGH QUALITY MADE BETTER THAN READY-TO-WEAR.
4. CREATING PRODUCTS/SERVICES FOR A SPECIFIC AREA OF CUSTOM CLOTHING SUCH AS BRIDAL WEAR OR SKIWEAR.
5. MARKETING TO A SPECIFIC GROUP SUCH AS CAREER WOMEN, WOMEN 55 AND OLDER, SINGLE MEN, LARGE SIZES.
6. USING NATURAL FIBERS RATHER THAN MANUFACTURED FIBERS SUCH AS LEATHER OR SUEDE RATHER THAN ULTRASUEDE.

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Approximately how many home-based custom clothier competitors in your local area do you have for your products/services? (Circle one number.)

1. 0-1
2. 2-3
3. 4 or more

11. Do your clients sometimes request new fabrics, new interfacings, or new embellishments you have not worked with? (Circle one response).

- YES  
NO

12. Select and rank the following new product/technique resources according to how useful they are to you in providing ideas for new product information? Please rank you top three choices in order from 1 (first and most useful) to 3 (third).

- \_\_\_\_ TRADE MAGAZINES  
(Such as Sew News, Threads)
- \_\_\_\_ WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS
- \_\_\_\_ COMMUNITY COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY COURSES/  
SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
- \_\_\_\_ SUPPLIERS
- \_\_\_\_ SALES ASSOCIATES AT FABRIC STORES
- \_\_\_\_ SEWING EXHIBITIONS
- \_\_\_\_ PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- \_\_\_\_ STATE EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS
- \_\_\_\_ TELEVISION PROGRAMS
- \_\_\_\_ OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

13. From the following list what aspect of setting a marketable price is the most challenging. (Please rank order from 1 to 3 with 1 as the most challenging).

- ESTIMATING TIME REQUIRED TO COMPLETE PROJECTS  
 CHARGING FOR LABOR, OVERHEAD, AND MATERIALS  
 WORKING FOR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES  
 CHARGING MORE THAN ESTIMATED FOR ADDITIONAL COST OF LABOR, SELECTED FABRICS, OR NOTIONS.  
 SETTING PRICES IN RELATION TO COMPETITORS' PRICES  
 OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

14. How effective are each of the following promotion methods for the marketing of your products and/or services? Please circle one number which most accurately describes the effectiveness of each method you have used. If you have not used the method listed, circle 0.

	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective At All	Have Not Used At All		
1. BUSINESS LISTING IN YELLOW PAGES	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. AD IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS/ NEIGHBORHOOD OR LOCAL	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. AD IN TRADE MAGAZINES (EXAMPLE: <u>THREADS, SEW NEWS</u> )	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. AD IN TRADE NEWSLETTERS (EXAMPLE: SERGER UPDATE).	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. BUSINESS WEBSITE/INTERNET	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. DIRECT MAILER/FLYERS/ BROCHURES SENT TO HOMES	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. AD IN CATALOGS (HOME-BASED BUSINESS CATALOG)	1	2	3	4	5	0
8. BUSINESS CARDS	1	2	3	4	5	0
9. SEW IN LABELS	1	2	3	4	5	0
10. REMOVEABLE PRODUCT HANG TAGS	1	2	3	4	5	0
11. TRADE SHOWS	1	2	3	4	5	0
12. CRAFT FAIRS (HOLIDAY MARKETS)	1	2	3	4	5	0
13. WORD-OF-MOUTH (SUCH AS REFERRALS FROM CUSTOMERS OR FRIENDS)	1	2	3	4	5	0
14. NETWORKING IN COMMUNITY	1	2	3	4	5	0

15. LIST IN A REFERRAL BOOK  
AT A FABRIC STORE

1      2      3      4      5      0

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

15. Which promotion method from the list above do you feel is the most effective in promoting your business? (Write one method in the blank). \_\_\_\_\_

16. Of all the methods listed in question 14, which promotion method do you feel is the most cost efficient to your business? (Write one method in the blank).  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. How beneficial are the following forms of marketing support from your PACC organization? Please circle one number which most accurately describes if you feel the following forms of marketing support are beneficial to you and your business. If you have not used the method listed, circle 0.

	Very Beneficial		Somewhat Beneficial		Not Beneficial At All	Have Not Used At All
1. SHARING OF BUSINESS CARD IDEAS	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. PRICING STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. NETWORKING	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. LOCAL NEWSLETTER	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. NATIONAL NEWSLETTER	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. REFERRALS IN THE YELLOW PAGES IN ASSOCIATION WITH PACC	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. PHONE LIST AT FABRIC STORES IN ASSOCIATION WITH PACC	1	2	3	4	5	0
8. PUBLICITY IN NEWSPAPER, FASHION MAGAZINES, AND SEWING MAGAZINES IN ASSOCIATION WITH PACC	1	2	3	4	5	0
9. WEB PAGE OF PACC AT NATIONAL LEVEL	1	2	3	4	5	0

10. PRODUCT/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT  
AT MEETINGS INCLUDING FITTING, VISUAL  
DESIGN, TEXTILE USAGE, SEWING  
TECHNIQUES, PATTERN MANIPULATION  
AND ALTERATION

1      2      3      4      5      0

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

18. Which marketing support method from the list above is the most beneficial in promoting your business? (Write one method in the blank.) \_\_\_\_\_

19. List any other organizations to which you belong that help you in the marketing aspect of your business. \_\_\_\_\_

20. Describe marketing support provided by PACC that you feel would benefit yourself and the PACC organization in the future. \_\_\_\_\_

### **GENERAL BUSINESS INFORMATION**

21. Which of the following examples represents the greatest percentage of your business output?(Circle one number).

1. PRODUCT (EXAMPLE:PATTERNMAKING, STANDARD SIZE GARMENTS)
2. SERVICE (EXAMPLE: ALTERATIONS, CONSULTATION ON STYLES, COLOR, AND FABRIC)
3. PRODUCT AND SERVICE (EXAMPLE: CUSTOM DESIGNS WHICH ARE MADE-TO-MEASURE OR ADAPTED COMMERCIAL PATTERNS)

Are any of your products/services associated with subcontracting to an outside employer? What percent? (0 to 100%). \_\_\_\_\_

22. Approximately what percent of your total household income is provided by your home-based business?

1. 0% to 25%
2. 26% to 50%
3. 51% to 75%
4. 76% to 100%

23. Are you satisfied with the level of profit from your business? (Circle one response).

YES  
NO

24. Have you or any person associated with your home-based business had experience and/or education in marketing (Circle one response).

YOU.....YES NO

OTHER ASSOCIATE (PLEASE SPECIFY ASSOCIATION/RELATIONSHIP)

**THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS WILL HELP US INTERPRET THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEMBERS. ALL ANSWERS WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.**

25. Your present age is:

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

over 60

26. Where did you attain your dressmaking/tailoring/pattern making/design skills?

(Check all that apply).

\_\_\_ HIGH SCHOOL

\_\_\_ COLLEGE

\_\_\_ COMMUNITY COLLEGE

\_\_\_ TRADESCHOOL

\_\_\_ APPRENTICESHIP OR EMPLOYMENT

\_\_\_ PARENT OR OTHER FAMILY MEMBER

\_\_\_ SEMINAR/WORKSHOPS

\_\_\_ FRIEND

\_\_\_ OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

From the list above which has been the most beneficial area of attaining your skills (Write one response.) \_\_\_\_\_

27. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Circle one number).

1. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OR TRADE CERTIFICATE

3. COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEGREE

4. SOME COLLEGE COURSEWORK

5. FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE

6. SOME POST-BACC, GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

7. GRADUATE DEGREE

**Thanks for your participation in this study. Your assistance is truly appreciated.**

Return to:

ZoeDel Frisbie

Oregon State University

224 Milam Hall

Corvallis, Oregon 97331-5101

Phone (541)757-6665

e-mail lantisz@ucs.orst.edu

DEPARTMENT OF APPAREL, INTERIORS,  
HOUSING AND MERCHANDISING



OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY  
224 Milam Hall • Corvallis, OR 97331-5101  
Telephone 541-737-3796  
Fax 541-737-0993

Date

Owner's Name  
Owner's Address  
City, State, and Zip

Dear Owner's Name

As an owner of a custom clothing business, one area of interest may be how to promote your business. I am a graduate student at Oregon State University. I am interested in studying how the members in a Professional Association of Custom Clothiers market their products and services. The focus of my thesis is a study of demographic characteristics and marketing strategies of products and services of home-based custom clothiers.

I have selected the Oregon Chapter of the PACC for my research for its geographical proximity to Oregon State University. The area of marketing can lead to difficult decisions for the home-based business owner. The aim of my survey is to learn what marketing strategies are currently used by the members of the PACC and how the organization could be more helpful in assisting members with marketing decisions in the future. The information I compile from this survey will not only be beneficial for my scholastic studies, but it will be beneficial to your organization to have the results shared with your members.

All testing in this survey will be conducted with the use of a mail survey. A questionnaire has been written to implement the survey. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. Strict anonymity about any personal parameters collected during this study will be maintained. All questionnaires will be destroyed after completing the degree. The more returned completed questionnaires the researcher has to analyze, the more useful and worthwhile the accuracy of the results from the study will be. It is important that you, the owner of the business, complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. (no postage necessary). If you'd like to receive a summary of results please write your name and address on the back of the return envelope used to return the questionnaire (not on the questionnaire).

The receipt of your completed questionnaire confirms that you understand and consent to the use of the information obtained for the thesis research and any publication that may result from the research. The results from this study will be submitted for publication using only cumulative results from all subjects. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. If you do not wish to participate in the study please return the uncompleted questionnaire and you will not receive any follow up mailings or reminders. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you should call Mary Nunn, Director of Sponsored Programs, OSU Research Office, (541)737-0670.

If you have any questions about the survey or questionnaire, please write to either of the following addresses or leave a phone message at either phone number.

ZoeDel Frisbie  
1026 N.W. 10<sup>th</sup>  
Corvallis, Oregon 97330  
(541) 757-6665

Nancy Bryant  
Oregon State University  
Milam Hall  
Corvallis, Oregon 97331-5101  
(541) 737-0989

Thanks for your assistance,

ZoeDel Frisbie, Graduate Student Researcher

Nancy Bryant, Graduate Advisor

**DEPARTMENT OF APPAREL, INTERIORS,  
HOUSING AND MERCHANDISING  
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
224 Miiam Hall Corvallis, OR 97331-5101  
Telephone 541-737-3796  
Fax 541-737-0993

Date

Dear PACC Member:

Last week a custom clothing home-based business owners survey was mailed to you. If you have already completed and returned it to me, **thank you**. If not, please do so today or at your earliest convenience. It is extremely important that your questionnaire be included in the study if the results are to accurately represent custom clothing home-based business owners who are members of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC.

If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or it was misplaced, please call me at (541) 757-6665 and I will mail another one right away.

Sincerely,

ZoeDel Frisbie  
Graduate Student



DEPARTMENT OF APPAREL, INTERIORS,  
HOUSING AND MERCHANDISING



**OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
224 Milam Hall • Corvallis, OR 97331-5101  
Telephone 541-737-3796  
Fax 541-737-0993

Date

Owner's Name  
Owner's Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Owner's Name:

About three (seven) weeks ago I wrote to you seeking your input about the marketing strategies of custom clothing home-based business owners who are members of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC. As of today I have not yet received your completed questionnaire. If you have completed the questionnaire and returned it, **thank you very much.**

I am writing to you again because of the important significance each completed questionnaire has to this study. In order for the results of this study to be truly representative of the custom clothing home-based business owners of the Oregon Chapter of the PACC it is essential that each person return a questionnaire. **Please take a few minutes to complete it.**

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed.

**Thank you** so very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

ZoeDel Frisbie  
Graduate Student

Nancy Bryant  
Graduate Advisor

**APPENDIX B**  
**Raw Data**

Table 1  
Perceived Needs of Clientele

Product/Service <sup>1</sup>	Rank 1 Frequency Percent	Rank 2 Frequency Percent	Rank 3 Frequency Percent
Custom Designs	1 2.63	8 21.05	5 13.89
Alterations for Styling Changes	7 18.42	9 23.68	5 13.89
Alterations for Special Needs	3 7.89	7 18.42	3 8.33
Bridal Wear	5 13.16	3 7.89	6 16.67
Childrens Wear	0 0	0 0	0 0
Menswear	1 2.63	1 2.63	1 2.63
Teaching	1 2.63	2 5.26	2 5.56
Non-Apparel	3 7.89	3 7.89	4 8.33
Garment Construction from Commercial Patterns	10 26.32	4 10.53	7 19.44
Other <sup>a</sup>	11		

<sup>1</sup>n=38, missing data=7

<sup>a</sup>sportswear, sewing tours, repair and alterations for theatre, production sewing, contract sewing, production sewing for fiber artists, prom dresses, ready-to-wear retail, wearable art, leather repairs, patternmaking and sample making,

Table 1A With All Responses  
Including the Respondents Who Identified the Perceived Needs of Clientele But Didn't Rank Them

Product/Service	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Identified But Didn't Rank
Custom Designs	1	8	5	4
Alterations for Styling Changes	7	9	5	4
Alterations for Special Needs	3	7	3	0
Bridal Wear	5	3	6	5
Children's Wear	0	0	0	0
Menswear <sup>7</sup>	1	1	1	0
Teaching	1	2	2	2
Non-Apparel	3	3	4	0
Garment Construction From Commercial Patterns	10	4	7	3
Other <sup>a</sup>	11			4

n = 45

<sup>a</sup>sportswear, sewing tours, repair and alterations for theatre, production sewing, contract sewing, production sewing for fiber artists, prom dresses, ready-to-wear retail, wearable art, leather repairs, patternmaking and sample making, evening wear, finished garments purchased at craft shows.

Table 2  
The Most Challenging Aspect of Setting  
A Marketable Price

Aspect <sup>1</sup>	Rank 1 Frequency Percent	Rank 2 Frequency Percent	Rank 3 Frequency Percent
Estimating Time Required to Complete Projects	20 48.78	10 25	3 7.5
Charging for Labor, Overhead, and Materials	4 9.76	8 20	13 32.50
Working for Friends and Relatives	8 20	4 10	3 7.5
Feeling Pressured When Quoting Prices	5 19.51	8 20	8 20
Charging More Than Estimated for Additional Cost of Labor, Selected Fabrics, or Notions	2 4.88	6 15	6 15
Setting Prices in Relation to Competitors Prices	0 0	3 7.5	7 17.5
Other <sup>a</sup>	3		

<sup>1</sup> n = 41, missing data = 4

<sup>a</sup> other clients in local area area not as willing to pay higher prices, setting prices that reflect her time, setting prices for San Francisco, Portland, and Chicago that work in all three areas.

Table 3  
Most Effective Methods of Promotion

Method	Total that have used the method	Very Effective 1 Frequency Percent	2 Frequency Percent	Somewhat Effective 3 Frequency Percent	4 Frequency Percent	Not Effective At All 5 Frequency Percent	Have Not Used At All 0 Frequency Percent <sup>a</sup>
Business Listings in the Yellow Pages	10	3 30	0 0	2 20	4 40	1 10	35 77.78
Ad in Local Newspapers/ Neighborhood or Local	12	2 16.67	0 0	4 33.33	2 16.67	4 33.33	33 73.33
Ad in Trade Magazines	6	0 0	1 16.67	4 66.67	0 0	1 16.67	39 86.67
Ad in Trade Newsletters	2	0 0	0 0	1 50	0 0	1 50	43 95.56
Business Website/Internet	6	0 0	1 16.67	2 33.33	1 16.67	2 33.33	39 86.67
Direct Mailer/Flyers/ Brochures sent to homes	4	1 7.14	2 14.28	6 42.86	3 21.43	2 14.29	31 68.89
Ad in catalogs (home-based business catalogs)	1	0 0	0 0	1 100	0 0	0 0	44 97.78
Business cards	44	13 29.55	8 18.18	18 40.91	5 11.36	0 0	1 2.22
Sew in labels	25	3 12	2 8	9 36	9 36	2 4.44	20 44.44
Removeable Product Hang Tags	6	1 16.67	1 16.67	1 16.67	2 33.33	1 16.67	39 86.67
Trade Shows	9	3 33.33	1 11.11	2 22.22	2 22.22	1 11.11	36 80
Word-of-Mouth	41	31 75.61	8 19.51	2 4.88	0 0	0 0	4 8.88
Networking in the Community	38	14 36.84	6 15.79	14 36.84	3 7.89	1 2.63	7 15.56

Table 3 (Continued)

Method	Total that have used the method	Very Effective 1 Percent Frequency	2 Percent Frequency	Somewhat Effective 3 Percent Frequency	4 Percent Frequency	Not Effective At All 5 Percent Frequency	Have Not Used At All 0 Percent <sup>a</sup> Frequency
List in a referral book at a fabric store	28	10 35.71	7 25	8 28.57	0 0	3 10.71	17 37.78
Other <sup>1</sup>	9						

<sup>1</sup> Referrals in the PACC

<sup>a</sup> Percent total based on n=45

**Table 4**  
**New Product/Technique Information Sources**

Source <sup>1</sup>	Rank 1 Frequency Percent	Rank 2 Frequency Percent	Rank 3 Frequency Percent
Trade Magazines <sup>c</sup>	<b>11</b> 24.44	<b>20</b> 47.62	<b>6</b> 16.22
Workshops/Seminars <sup>b</sup>	<b>12</b> 28.57	<b>13</b> 30.95	<b>8</b> 21.62
Community College/University Courses/Seminars/Workshops	<b>1</b> 2.38	<b>0</b> 0	<b>2</b> 5.41
Suppliers	<b>1</b> 2.38	<b>1</b> 2.38	<b>5</b> 13.51
Sales Associates at Fabric Stores	<b>0</b> 0	<b>1</b> 2.38	<b>0</b> 0
Sewing Exhibitions	<b>3</b> 7.14	<b>0</b> 0	<b>7</b> 18.92
Professional Organizations	<b>12</b> 28.57	<b>6</b> 14.29	<b>7</b> 18.92
State Extension Publications	<b>0</b> 0	<b>0</b> 0	<b>1</b> 2.38
Television Programs	<b>0</b> 0	<b>0</b> 0	<b>1</b> 2.38
Other <sup>a</sup>	<b>3</b>		

<sup>1</sup>n = 41, missing data = 4

<sup>a</sup>PACC Educational Conference, fellow professionals, and word-of-mouth

<sup>b</sup>Referred to PACC workshops/seminars

<sup>c</sup>Referred to importance of trade magazines and books keeping up-to-date



**Table 5**  
**Current Marketing Support From**  
**The PACC Organization**

Method	Total that have used the method	Very Beneficial		Somewhat Beneficial		Not Beneficial At All	Have Not Used At All
		1	2	3	4	5	0 <sup>1</sup>
		Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	
		Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Sharing of Business Card Ideas	38	4 12.12	4 12.12	16 48.48	5 15.15	4 12.12	12 26.67
Pricing Strategies	41	20 46.51	10 23.26	12 26.67	1 2.22	0 0	4 4.44
Networking	41	22 53.66	13 31.71	5 12.20	1 2.44	0 0	4 8.89
Local Newsletter	33	8 24.24	7 21.21	12 36.36	4 12.12	2 6.06	12 26.67
National Newsletter	33	3 9.09	4 12.12	10 30.30	11 33.33	5 15.15	12 26.67
Referrals in Yellow Pages In Association w/PACC	31	10 31.25	8 25	14 43.75	0 0	0 0	13 28.89
Referrals at fabric stores in association w/PACC	28	10 35.71	6 21.43	10 35.71	2 7.14	0 0	17 37.78
Publicity in newspaper/ fashion and sewing magazines in association w/PACC	24	1 4.17	3 12.5	11 45.83	5 20.83	4 16.67	21 46.67
Web Page at National Level	13	0 0	1 7.69	0 0	3 23.08	9 69.23	32 71.11
Product/Service Development at meetings	41	28 68.29	9 21.95	4 9.76	0 0	0 0	4 8.89
Other <sup>a</sup>	1						

<sup>a</sup> other members have gone on her tours.

<sup>1</sup> percent based on n=45

Table 6  
Numerical Display of Returned Questionnaires

Questionnaires Returned	Number Returned After First Mailing and Follow-Up Postcard	Number Returned After Second Mailing	Number Returned After Third Mailing
Identified as Useable	34	11	0
Identified as Not Useable	3	2	0
Did Not Want to Participate	1	1	0
Did Not Meet Criterion of Survey No Home-Based Business	3	10	4
Undeliverable	1	0	0
Not Returned	40	16	12
Total Mailed	82	40	16