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Involvement, satisfaction, and brand loyalty in a small business services setting

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Involvement, satisfaction, and brand loyalty in a small business services setting

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Abstract

Considerable resources are expended annually on building business brands, yet the literature is virtually silent on brand loyalty in a business setting. This study examines the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty in a business services context, and attempts to identify two key antecedents of loyalty in this context. In particular, little is known about small businesses as customers, despite their significant contribution to the economies of developed nations. A longitudinal design is implemented, and data are captured on both attitudinal loyalty and subsequent loyalty behaviours (i.e., actual purchase behaviour). The findings demonstrate the value of conceptualizing and measuring both attitudinal and behavioural components of brand loyalty. Specifically, the results indicate that attitudinal loyalty mediates the effects of the antecedents studied (category involvement and purchase satisfaction) on behavioural loyalty. Implications for marketing theory and practitioners are discussed, and possible directions for future research are sketched.

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1. Introduction

Brand loyalty is a focal point of interest for marketing researchers and practitioners. Past research suggests that loyal customers spend more than non-loyal customers, act as advocates for a brand by engaging in positive word of mouth, and are therefore "at the heart of a company's most valuable customer group" (Ganesh et al., 2000, p. 65; Zeithaml et al., 1996). However, the literature on brand loyalty is incomplete in several important respects. A key area of controversy lies in competing approaches to the definition and measurement of attitudinal versus behavioural loyalty. Typically, brand loyalty is defined with reference to either attitudinal or behavioural components. This view is too simplistic, and there are potential gains from advancing a holistic approach which incorporates both components of loyalty. This article adopts a broadened perspective, conceptualizing and measuring both attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of loyalty. Additionally, this study explores loyalty within the context of business services, which may differ from consumer settings in several important respects. Business purchases can involve greater levels of decision-making input and higher transaction costs than consumer purchases. Loyalty in a business context is less likely to be a function of routine or habit, as in some low-involvement consumer purchases. Therefore, it is especially important in a business context to

examine both a buyer's attitudinal predisposition towards a brand and the behavioural manifestation of this attitude in the form of actual purchase behaviour.

Brand loyalty in consumer contexts is well researched (e.g., Ajzen and Fishbein, 1991; Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996; Day, 1969; East and Hammond 1996, Ehrenberg; -1-988; Guest, 1942; Jacoby, 1971; Oliver, 1999). By contrast, the literature is virtually silent on brand loyalty in business contexts, and there is almost no research on loyalty from a small business perspective. This is surprising given the economic contribution of small businesses to the national economy. Small business accounts for more than 51% of US gross domestic product (Come, 2000) and more than two-thirds of growth in new jobs annually (Valas, 2005). Many large corporations have their distant origins in small business (Cunningham, 2000). Additionally, small businesses place some unique demands on their owners, who are often managers involved in the day-to-day running of their companies. Perhaps the diversity of the small business sector has made it difficult to quantify its contribution, and has fed misperceptions of its relative unimportance (Streeter and Cocheo, 2003; Cunningham, 2000). Yet, even organizations as large as Xerox and IBM are realizing that small business accounts can be attractive, and are an often overlooked source of growth for new products.

With a focus on small business as customers comes the need to know how to market to these customers. A key part of this process is developing loyalty. Hence, this initial study attempts to contribute to the marketing literature by identifying the potential antecedents of brand loyalty in a business services context. The study aims to: (1) examine the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty in a small business purchase setting and (2) to determine the key antecedents of loyalty in this business context.

2. Background literatures

2.1 Brand loyalty

As early as the 1960s, definitions of brand loyalty incorporated both attitudinal and behavioural concepts, yet few empirical studies have incorporated both dimensions. Instead, research in this area appears to have fragmented into two distinct traditions, with behavioural researchers focusing on the observable actions of loyal customers (Ehrenberg, and Goodhardt, 2000) and attitudinal researchers investigating commitment to brands and repurchase intentions (Dorsch et al., 2000; Patterson et al., 1997). Research in these traditions has produced studies of the level of commitment consumers' display towards a brand, how decisions taken at one moment affect subsequent purchases, and consumers' relative expenditure on brands in a category. Despite the view that brand loyalty be conceptualized broadly and be reflected by both attitudinal and behavioural measures (Dick and Basu, 1994; Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996), few studies in either the consumer marketing or business marketing literatures have incorporated both dimensions of brand loyalty.

This research draws on the conceptual work of Dick and Basu (1994), who propose that customer loyalty is the result of psychological processes and has behavioural manifestations, and should therefore incorporate both attitudinal and behavioural components. Hence, the model advanced here attempts to empirically link attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in a business services context. Additionally, the model incorporates the potential antecedents of brand loyalty relevant to this context (i.e., category involvement, and purchase satisfaction). Satisfaction is recognized as an important antecedent to loyalty in both the consumer and business marketing literatures. Satisfaction with previous purchase experiences is likely to play an

important role in determining future purchase behaviours particularly as an effort-minimization strategy (Jones and Suh, 2000; Pritchard et al., 1999). Category involvement is also important in this context, and is posited as a potential driver of consumer loyalty.

2.2. Small business research

Small business is a significant contributor to the economies of most developed countries. However, many small businesses suffer from a lack of resources and because of the typically small scale of their operations. This can lead to increased business failure and higher bankruptcy rates than the broader economy, which has significant impacts for both the owners and employees of these businesses. Thus, it is in both the personal and financial interests of business owners and employees, and broader national economic interests, to increase the success rate of small businesses. One way that small business can improve its operations is through the stabilization of cash flows and revenues through repeat purchase behaviour. More generally, "customer loyalty is a prime contributor in sustainable growth" for small businesses (Valas, 2005, p54).

Much of the past research on small business is conducted from the perspective of a small business producer or seller, and not from the perspective of a small business as a buyer (e.g. Gilmore et al., 2004; Pederson, 1989; Pelham, 2000). Given the limited resources of small businesses, and the nature of small business buying and selling roles, strategies that reduce risk and smooth revenues are worth pursuing. Brand loyalty is one of these strategies (Bettina!, 1973; Gordon et al., 1993). Despite the relevance and importance of understanding brand loyalty in the small business sector, there are few attempts to document why small businesses display loyalty to business brands. Therefore, the current study proposes a model of the drivers of loyalty for small businesses, and explicitly addresses why small business owners display attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (see Fig. 1). The model incorporates both attitudinal and behavioural components of loyalty and category involvement and purchase satisfaction are posited as the key drivers of loyalty.

3. Hypothesis development

3.1. Brand loyalty

The literature discusses attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of loyalty (Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996; Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994). Attitudinal loyalty is an attitudinal predisposition consisting of commitment to a brand and intention to repurchase the brand (Mellens et id., 1996).

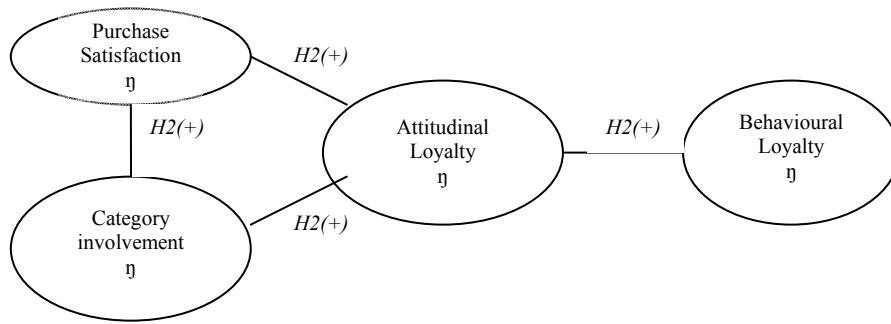


Fig 1. Proposed model of the potential antecedents of small business loyalty

The commitment aspect reflects the affective component of an attitude and the intention aspect reflects the cognitive or evaluative component. In contrast, behavioural research is concerned only with observable actions (i.e., actual purchase behaviours). Accordingly, behavioural loyalty is defined as consumers' repeat purchasing of a brand, which is revealed through patterns of continued patronage and actual spending behaviours (Hammond et al., 1996). This is reflected directly in brand sales and so-called share of wallet measures.

Brand loyalty has been well researched in consumer markets, focusing mainly on fast moving consumer goods (Fast et al., 2000; Traylor, 1981). This tradition tends to focus on measurable behaviours. Research on loyalty in consumer services emerged in the 1980s (Quelch and Ash, 1981; Shimp and Dyer, 1981). This research concentrated on consumers' repurchase intentions and their commitment to service brands, rather than on measures of behavioural loyalty. Yet, both aspects of loyalty are important and this is particularly the case for furthering research on business services. Business transactions tend to be higher in value than consumer transactions, which increase the level of involvement. Involvement is also likely to be higher for small business purchases. The risk of business failure is increased because of the limited resources available to these firms. Attitudes are likely to precede behaviour for the business sector, where relationships between customer and supplier are important and decision-making and accountability is critical. This is consistent with psychological models of individual behaviour, where attitudes predict subsequent behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1991). Brand loyalty for small business is therefore likely to be characterized by the formation of attitudinal loyalty, which will be followed by the display of behavioural loyalty.

H₁. Attitudinal loyalty towards a preferred brand relates positively with behavioural brand loyalty for business services.

3.2. Satisfaction

Satisfaction is well researched for consumer services (Curran et al., 2003; Ganesh et al., 2000). Many empirical studies show that satisfaction is an antecedent of brand attitude, brand intention, and attitudinal brand loyalty for consumer services (Oliver, 1980; Pritchard et al., 1999; Shimp and Dyer, 1981). However, research on satisfaction and loyalty from the perspectives of business purchasing and business services is not well documented (Patterson et al., 1997; Shimp and Dyer, 1981). The high credence nature of business services typically results in customers being more likely to rely on prior expectations, so that satisfaction for business services is likely to be evaluative in nature. Thus, satisfaction is likely to be an important driver of loyalty in business settings, as it implies an evaluation of a brand's performance based

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on a small business' experience with past purchases of the brand. Satisfaction is an antecedent of attitudinal loyalty in this context.

H₂. Satisfaction with a preferred brand relates positively with attitudinal loyalty to the preferred brand for business services.

3.3. Involvement

Involvement represents the level of interest or importance of an object to an individual, or the centrality of an object to an individuals' ego structure (Day, 1969; Zaichowsky, 1984). The involvement construct has been well researched, and is seen as a central concept involvement the consumer behaviour literature. Involvement in business research has received little attention, yet it could be important in this context (cf. Patterson et al., 1997: Patterson, 1993). The level of involvement determines the level of decision importance in the purchasing process, and business customers are likely to display attitudinal loyalty for high involvement purchases. Expenditure decisions are crucial in small businesses, and a scarcity of resources can heighten the importance of decision making. Costs have a direct impact on the personal finances of the business owners through reduced profits. Given the personal impact of purchases, it is likely that a small business owner will attach high levels of importance to purchasing, The more involved a business purchaser is in a purchase, the more likely he or she would be loyal to that brand. Thus, involvement with the product category is likely to influence attitudinal loyalty to brands within the category.

H₃. Involvement with a product category relates positively with attitudinal loyalty towards a preferred brand for business services.

Involvement and satisfaction are well researched concepts in the consumer literature, and it is generally assumed that high involvement results in high levels of satisfaction (Mudie et al., 2003; Richins and Bloch, 1991; Shaffer and Sherrell, 1997). Consumers with high involvement are motivated to experience higher satisfaction (McCull-Kennedy and Fetter, 2001; Oliver and Bearden, 1983; Richins and Bloch, 1991). They usually have a high level of knowledge about the product, and this may lead to a better purchase choice and a level of satisfaction (Oliver and Bearden, 1983; Shaffer and Sherrell, 1997). In a business context, satisfaction may be an antecedent of involvement rather than a consequence. Consider a situation where a business purchaser is highly satisfied with a service provider. This context may increase the level of involvement with the subsequent purchase, because of the positive experience with past decisions. However, the reverse of this relationship is also possible, with higher satisfaction leading to higher levels of involvement. Cognitive consistency theories posit that individuals aim to maintain a consistent set of cognitions and beliefs (Steinberg, 1987). One of these theories is Bem's (1972 theory of self perception. According to this viewpoint, one reduces the dissonance between competing cognitions of the basis of self perception i.e., (I am satisfied: therefore I must be becoming more involved"). In the case of small business, the self-images of business owners are often linked to the success or failure of their businesses, as their businesses are often viewed as an extension of themselves. In order to maintain consistency between their self images and the outcomes desired for their business, business owners may become more involved in key decisions and events. More emphasis might be placed on the importance a brand, because owners feel satisfied with their decision to purchase the brand. Conversely, if they are dissatisfied with a purchase, they may become less involved as a means or distancing themselves from

the perceived problem, and thus maintaining cognitive consistency. Given there is little empirical evidence of this relationship to date, and the strong evidence for involvement as an antecedent to satisfaction, the conceptual model shows the conventional view of the relationship between the two constructs.

H₄. Involvement with a product category relates positively with satisfaction with the preferred brand for business services.

4. Method

4.1 Sample and data collection

The study was conducted among business buyers who were customers of a leading telephone directory advertising firm. The company records on these customers included expenditure on all competitive brands of telephone directory advertising (Yellow Pages, Big Colour Pages, and the Phone Directory Company). Directory listing was selected because it is a commonly purchased business service, and it has many of the features of typical business buyer behaviour. Additionally, a cooperative partnership with a leading market player allowed the possibility of access to customers' purchase records. The first stage of data collection involved a pilot study to test the survey instrument. The second stage involved the administration of the survey instrument to a larger sample using a mail questionnaire, as described below. The questionnaire captured data on the focal constructs, with the exception of behavioural loyalty. Subsequently, the survey data was matched with actual purchase behaviour for the purpose of calculating behavioural loyalty scores. The actual items used to measure the focal constructs were based on past studies in marketing, and are listed in the Appendix.

The survey was mailed to 1472 businesses. Six businesses declined to participate in the study and 135 survey packets were returned due to incorrect or changed addresses. This resulted in an effective sampling frame consisting of 1331 businesses. After the initial mail-out and a follow-up phone call (Dillman, 1978), 267 questionnaires were returned for an effective response rate of 20%.

The sample consists predominantly of small businesses (89%), in the national business population. The mean years of business experience for the sample is 14 years. The mean number of employees is 16 full-time employees and 13 part-time employees. Eighty-two percent of respondents were the business owners. The size of the businesses and the position of the respondents are consistent with a small business profile. The businesses were drawn predominantly from the personal and other services, retail trading, and construction industries. The possibility of non-response bias was assessed using an extrapolation method that compared waves of early and late respondents on key demographics characteristics (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). No significant differences between the groups were found, which suggests that non-response bias is unlikely to be a problem. The descriptive statistics on behavioural loyalty are reported as a mean of 0.82 (82%) it has a range of 1.00 and a standard deviation of 0.25.

5. Results

5.1 Measurement validation

One-factor models for each latent variable were estimated as a preliminary step, and provided an initial test of item reliability and validity. These models and all

subsequent models were estimated using the LISREL 8.54 program with sample covariance used as input (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996). The one-factor models achieve good fit to the sample data. As an additional check of measure reliability and validity, a confirmatory factor analysis model was estimated. All of the latent variables were represented in this model and were modelled as correlated first-order factors. The measurement model achieved satisfactory fit to the sample data. The chi-squared value for the measurement model is significant ($\chi^2(85)=261.90, p < .05$), which might be expected given the chi-squared statistic's sensitivity to sample size (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). However, a sample of other fit measures indicate good model fit to the sample data (goodness-of-fit index [GFI]= .89, adjusted goodness-of-fit index [AGFI]= .84, comparative fit index [CFI] =.97, root mean square residual [RMR] =.05, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA]= .08). On the basis of these descriptive fit indices, the measurement model appears to fit the sample data well.

Additionally, all of the factor loadings exceed .50 and are significant ($p < .01$). The significance of the factor loadings provides evidence of convergent validity at the item level. The multi-item scales achieve high reliability as measured by construct reliability. See the Appendix for the scale reliability scores. Furthermore, discriminant validity was achieved for all possible pairs of latent variables (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table I presents the correlations among the latent variables. The correlations provide an initial test of and tentative support for the research hypotheses.

5.2. Estimation of proposed model

The proposed model (Fig. 1) was estimated next for a stronger test of the research hypotheses.

Like the measurement model, estimating this model produced a significant chi-squared value ($X^2(87) = 263.84, p < .05$). However, the other fit measures indicate

Table 1

Correlations among constructs				
	1	2	3	4
Behavioural Loyalty	1.00			
Attitudinal Loyalty	0.22	1.00		
Purchase Satisfaction	0.19	0.75	1.00	
Category involvement	0.18	0.71	0.46	1.00

adequate fit to the sample data (GFI=.88, AGFI =.83, CFI =.98, RMR=.05, RMSEA =.08). The standardized parameter estimates for the proposed model are reported in Table 2. As predicted in H1, the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty is positive and significant ($\beta_{12}=.23, t=2.54$). Next, the relationship between purchase satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty is strongly positive and significant ($\beta_{12}=.23, t=2.54$). Next, the relationship between purchase satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty is strongly positive and significant ($\beta_{23}=.54, t=8.98$), supporting H2. The relationship between category involvement and purchase satisfaction are positive and significant ($\beta_{24}=.46, t=8.02, \beta_{34} = .45, t=7.01$), as predicted relationships.

Examining the squared multiple correlations (SMCs) for the latent variables provides additional information on model fit. The proposed model explains five percent of the variance in behavioural loyalty and 74% of the variation in attitudinal loyalty. Twenty percent of the variation in purchase satisfaction is explained. The model fit statistics, path estimates, and SMCs support the hypothesized model, yet other model formulations could be examined. This issue and the overall pattern of results is discussed further in the next section.

6. Discussion

This research examines the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty in a business services context, and to determine the key antecedents of loyalty in this context. The results indicate that attitudinal loyalty is a significant explanatory variable in the prediction of behavioural loyalty, and significant relationships were found between attitudinal loyalty and the antecedents studied (i.e., purchase satisfaction and category involvement).

6.1 Attitudinal and behavioural loyalty

There is a positive relationship between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. This finding extends the business marketing literature, which tends to focus on pre-purchase decision making and purchase satisfaction (cf. Cravens and Finn, 1983; Webster and Wind, 1972), rather than the link between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Furthermore, finding a significant relationship between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty offers empirical support for a broadened perspective on loyalty research (cf. Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996; Dick and Basu, 1994). Importantly, this

study demonstrates the value of including both attitudinal and behavioural measures of loyalty, and particularly for business services. This relationship would not have been revealed if only attitudinal or behavioural loyalty had been studied. In past research, particularly in consumer markets, researchers have sometimes used measures of attitudinal loyalty as a proxy for behavioural loyalty. The results reported here tend to support the assumption behind this practice. Changes in attitudinal loyalty can influence behavioural loyalty. Although behavioural loyalty may exist because businesses are limited in their choices (cf. Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995), the results in the present study suggest that high levels of attitudinal loyalty are antecedent to high levels of behavioural loyalty.

6.2. Antecedents of loyalty

The marketing literature includes few studies of business loyalty. This initial study begins to address this important gap, and shows that purchase satisfaction is the key driver of loyalty in this setting. Involvement is also important to this process; however, satisfaction has a stronger influence on attitudinal loyalty. This means that intention to repurchase and commitment to the brand is more likely to be influenced by satisfaction with a previous purchase experience, than by the level of importance of the purchase.

6.3. Satisfaction and involvement

Consistent with past findings from consumer studies, the pattern of results reported here suggests that involvement is antecedent to satisfaction, at least in the business context studied. When business customers are involved with a product, they are more likely to be satisfied with the outcome. This may become an issue for purchases that become habitual and automated over time, such as straight rebuys. In this case, as the involvement level decreases with the habitual nature of the purchase, the level of satisfaction may also decrease. If the satisfaction levels reach a point of less than optimal, this may be a trigger for the consumer to seek alternatives or try alternative suppliers. Cognitive consistency theory offers an explanation for the relationship between involvement and satisfaction. If a business-owner invests invest time to seek information or if the product is very important, then they are unlikely to be dissatisfied as this would indicate they had wasted their time, or used it ineffectively.

Table 2
Path estimates for proposed model

Path estimates	Proposed model
Attitudinal loyalty → behavioural loyalty (β_{12})	0.23 ^a (2.54) ^b
Purchase Satisfaction → attitudinal loyalty (β_{23})	0.54 (8.98)
Category involvement → attitudinal loyalty (β_{24})	0.46 (8.02)
Category involvement → purchase satisfaction (β_{34})	0.46 (7.01)

Notes: ^abeta coefficient ^bt-value.

6. 4-Managerial- implications

Importantly, satisfaction is the key construct in the development of attitudinal loyalty for business services, which in turn, predicts behavioural loyalty. Satisfaction has an important mediating role in the relationship between perceived risk and attitudinal loyalty, and satisfaction is highly related to involvement with a product category. Thus, a business that aims to increase attitudinal brand loyalty levels should recognize the central role of satisfaction. The results show that satisfied businesses are more loyal and this translates into actual purchase behaviour. However, the relationship between satisfaction and involvement, if the customer behaviour becomes automated thus reducing involvement then there could be detrimental impact on satisfaction. Thus marketers need to develop strategies aiming at maintaining the level of involvement with their product.

Indeed, the long-term gains from securing revenue streams from small business loyalty could be significant. Small business customers are often overlooked in a search for larger business customers. Larger customers are often aware of their potential market power and can use this to their advantage, and it may be easier to keep a smaller customer satisfied. As they are often neglected, any effort directed towards them may meet with a positive response. Certainly, the results reported here that small businesses do display loyalty behaviour, and their purchase experiences are crucial in the establishment of loyalty attitudes and behaviours.

This research highlights the potential value of including both attitudinal and behavioural measures of loyalty. Several practical implications flow on from this approach. For example, both attitudinal and behavioural measures could be implemented to diagnose and manage loyalty. Having both measures allows a seller to segment customers according to their attitudinal and behavioural brand loyalty scores. Using this approach, each potential customer can be identified as high or low on both dimensions, and classified accordingly (cf. Baldinger and Rubinson. 1996). Simply knowing the proportion of customers in each segment can be a first step for marketers seeking to develop marketing strategies for each cell. The key question is how to move customers into the high attitudinal loyalty segment, and consequently into the high behavioural loyalty segment. Importantly, the model and results presented here provide marketers with guidance as to the potential antecedents of loyalty. Customers that are high on attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty represent an ideal state, yet one that is achievable. These businesses might become advocates and recommend the brand to other small businesses. This possibility along with other approaches to classifying businesses according to their loyalty scores should be pursued further.

6.5. Directions for future research

Despite the findings reported here, it is important to acknowledge several limitations. These should be balanced against the advantages of a longitudinal design and the difficulty in collecting survey data and matching it with archival records of customers' purchase behaviours (i.e., expenditure on competitive brands in a market). Future research should investigate the applicability of the final (re-specified) model to other contexts. For instance, the final model should be retested in other sectors, such as business durables, consumer durables and fast moving consumer goods. Additionally, using a single product, such as directory advertising, in some respects limits the results to this purchase setting. Studying other settings would help to establish that the

results are not context dependent, but are representative of at least other business services.

The small businesses that the sample represents are diverse in many ways. A number of widely varying industries are represented, including personal and other services (24%), retail trading (22%), construction (13%), manufacturing (8%), and hospitality (7%). The sample characteristics suggest wide variation in the measured variables, and the characteristics of the businesses themselves vary widely (e.g., years of operation number of employees). Additionally, the results of a small scale pilot study using different respondents, but in the same industry were indicative of the results reported in the main study.

Finally, small business owners display a degree of cognitive consistency, for the purpose of reducing dissonance which explain the link between involvement and satisfaction. Bem's (1972) theory of self-perception offers a different perspective particularly as small business owners often closely connect their perceptions of success or failure to the performance of their businesses. Decision making that is perceived as successful might deepen an owner's interest and involvement in particular strategies, purchases, and outcomes. Future research could investigate how the self-perception of the business owners influences other aspects of business purchasing. One useful avenue for further research, would be to test the extent to which small business owners "identify" with their businesses and how this shapes the degree of cognitive consistency that they display. Although this initial study provides some useful insights into loyalty in business markets, further work is necessary fore explaining loyalty attitudes and behaviours in business contexts.

Appendix A. Measurement items

Measures	Source
Behavioural loyalty Single item (i.e., spending on preferred brand/total spending on all brands in category)	Ehrenberg and Goodhardt
Attitudinal loyalty (Cronbach's alpha=0.87; average inter-item correlation=0.71) Purchasing my preferred b rand would be: Bad – good Unfavourable- favourable Undesirable – desirable I would recommend my preferred directory to others Strongly disagree – strongly agree The level of commitment you have to preferred brand Uncommitted – committed	Martin (1998) Martin and Goodell (1991), and Taylor (1981)
Purchase satisfaction (Cronbach's alpha=0.95: average interitem correlation = 0.86) I am satisfied with my decision to purchase my preferred brand My choice to purchase my preferred brand was	Oliver (1980)

a wise one

I feel good about my decision concerning my
concerning my preferred brand

I think that I did the right thing when I decided
to purchase my preferred brand

Category involvement (Cronbach's alpha = Zaichowsky (1985)
0.90; average inter-item correlation = 0.77)

How would you describe your purchases in this
category?

Unimportant – important

Irrelevant – relevant

Means nothing to me – means a lot to me

Valuable – worthless

Small business

Is this business independently owned and
operated?

Does the owner control most, if not all, of the
operating capital?

Is the owner the principal decision-maker?

The definition of a small business is
one that is independently owned and
operated, the owner controls the
operating capital and is responsible
for the principal decision making
processes (ABS, 1990)

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