Some consumers like to travel and others find traveling a royal pain. Traveling presents consumers with a host of situations that can alter a service’s value. Let’s consider breakfast. How much is too much to pay for a nice breakfast with bacon, eggs, coffee, and juice? After tax and tip, this comes to $10 at Waffle House. That may not seem like too much, and many travelers visit Waffle House every day. How does $45 sound? Ordinarily, $45 would seem like a very high price to pay for breakfast. But for the millions of consumers who attend conventions and conferences in major cities each day, a $45 breakfast, usually not cooked to order, is more the rule than the exception. The food and beverages that associations purchase for their convention delegates represent a major source of revenue for hotels. Any convention planner knows that breakfast for the delegates can easily cost $45 a person. The hotel may list the price at just over $30, but the built-in service charge will top 20%, and taxes often are 10% or more. How can breakfast be worth so much?

A partial list of considerations that might shape value for travelers and other consumers includes:

* Is someone else (a third-party payer) completely or partially subsidizing the consumption?
* Is the consumer alone or with others?
* What are the economic conditions like?
* How much time is the consumer spending in the location?
* If traveling abroad, what is the exchange rate?
* How is the consumer paying for things?
* Are any items like hotel rooms prepaid?
* Can the consumer access reviews online?

In the case of the $45 breakfast, the convention attendee is not paying for the breakfast, although he/she may pay registration to attend the convention. If the association is not supplying breakfast, the consumer may still take the breakfast buffet in the hotel restaurant, which may only run about $35. One might think about whether that can go on the expense account before heading to the restaurant. If not, there’s almost certainly a coffee shop or fast-food option nearby in a major city, maybe even a Waffle House. The handy Waffle House Locator app may help save $25!

11-1a **Situations and Value**

This chapter focuses on precisely how the value a consumer obtains from a purchase or consumption act varies based on the context in which the act takes place. *Situational influences* is the term that captures these contextual effects, meaning effects independent of enduring consumer, brand, or product characteristics. As can be seen in the CVF framework, situational influences directly affect both consumer decision making and the eventual value experienced.Situational influences are enduring characteristics of neither a particular consumer nor a product or brand. Indeed, situational influences are ephemeral, meaning they are temporary conditions in a very real sense. Contexts can affect communication, shopping, brand preference, purchase, actual consumption, and the evaluation of that consumption.

The movie theater experience typifies situational influences. If the movie is a matinee, the consumer expects to pay a lower price than he would pay in the evening. Even though the movie hasn’t changed, the number of people available to go to the movie has changed from the evening hours. Therefore, the lower demand entices the theater to offer lower prices. Far fewer people work in the evenings, and thus more people are free to take in a movie.

How much is too much for one margarita? Consumers attending an event at the $1 billion AT&T Stadium for the Dallas Cowboys must think a margarita, or a “Cowboy” Rita, is worth at least $16.Each time a big game is played there, consumers buy thousands of “Cowboy” Ritas at $16.Outside the stadium, the consumer could mix a margarita for a couple of dollars. However, management does not allow consumers to bring those inside, so the convenience factors, along with the souvenir cowboy boot cup, add to its value. Situational influences change the desirability of consuming things and therefore change the value of these things.