Leveraging Brands to Overcome Resistance to Radical Innovation

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Abstract

Consumer resistance constitutes a major barrier for firms aiming to diffuse radical innovation into mainstream markets. While recent studies have highlighted the importance of brands in innovation adoption, surprisingly little is understood about the role that brands play in overcoming consumer resistance to innovations. To address this paucity of research, this study builds on the self-brand connections (e.g. Park et al. 2010) and brand concept literatures (e.g. Torelli, Monga, and Kaikati 2012) to examine how brands affect consumers' resistance to radical innovation. Findings show that strong self-brand connections have a positive influence on consumers' adoption intentions, and that this effect is mediated by a decrease in perceived functional and psychological barriers (Study 1). Further, these relationships are moderated by the brand concept, and that the influence of self-brand connections on resistance is much lower for conservation brands than for openness brands (Study 2).

Keywords: *Innovation Resistance; Brand Concept; Autonomous Vehicles*

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