

The dark side of consumer-smart object relationship: A non-user perspective

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Abstract

Smart Objects promise to become an essential presence in consumer life and routines. Due to their abilities, these devices can be perceived as a social entity and also able to play different kinds of social roles. However, the diffusion of Smart Objects is not meeting the expectation. Pivoting on Smart Object social roles, the relational approach, already used in the marketing literature, can be an appropriate tool to understand the non-user resistance toward these innovative devices with anthropomorphic features. Thirty-three non-users participated in ZMET interviews. Four types of fears emerged from the coding of the interviews. Each fear is associated with a specific social role played by the Smart Object: Fear of Being Controlled (the Smart Object as a Stalker); Fear of Being Dominated (the Smart Object as a Captor); Fear of Being Subordinated (the Smart Object as a Master); Fear of Losing Self-Control (the Smart Object as a Seducer).

Keywords: Barriers, Internet of Things, Consumer-Smart Object Relationship.

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