

“Solving the Mystery about Mystery Deals”—How the Resolution of Mystery Deals
Influences Consumers' Post-Purchase Behavior

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Abstract

Many firms use mystery deals, i.e., offers of products or services, whose identity is unknown until after purchase, to stimulate consumers' purchase intentions. Yet, to evaluate the overall success of such campaigns, we need to understand how consumers' loyalty is affected after the purchase of a mystery deal, especially when the outcome does not confirm consumers' preferences. Our results show that consumers' loyalty intentions increase in case of confirming mystery deal outcomes compared to traditional deals. When receiving a disconfirming mystery deal, consumers' loyalty intentions decrease, however, they do not fall below the level of consumers not receiving a mystery deal. Using survey and facial expression data, we show that consumers' positive pre-purchase affect spills over to the post-purchase phase, buffering the negative consequences of a disconfirming mystery deal outcome.

Keywords: *mystery deals; emotional spillover; retail promotions*

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