

Effects of a Brand's Warmth and Competence in Product Recalls

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Effects of a Brand's Warmth and Competence in Product Recalls

Abstract

In the presence of increasing product complexity and social media as a platform to express product-related experiences, product recalls are ubiquitous and salient. Previous research suggested that high brand equity may help to attenuate the typically expected negative consumer responses to such occurrences. In two studies—one laboratory experiment and one online experiment—we investigate how an important source of consumer-based brand equity, i.e., perceptions of a brand's warmth and competence, can influence consumer responses. Our research reveals that scoring high on both dimensions can buffer a brand against negative word-of-mouth. In addition, we show that consumer characteristics moderate this relationship: if ethical brand behavior is perceived as important, warmth is a primary driver of reducing negative word-of-mouth. Our results highlight the relevance of brand perception regarding warmth and competence in managing product recalls.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Consumer Behaviour, Marketing Strategy*

Track: Product and Brand Management