

The Upcycling Effect

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Cite as:

Schulz Michael, Völckner Franziska, Imschloss Monika (2019), The Upcycling Effect.
Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy, 48th, (8690)

Paper presented at the 48th Annual EMAC Conference, Hamburg, May 24-27, 2019.



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Abstract

Upcycling, i.e., reusing waste without comminution, contributes to waste reduction, preservation of natural resources, and reduction of energy consumption. While upcycling has recently drawn the attention of consumers and companies, research dedicated to upcycling is scarce. This article extends knowledge on upcycling in three ways: First, it demonstrates that upcycled products increase purchase intentions (cf. non-upcycled products). Second, the article shows that upcycled products fulfill a self-serving function for consumers, i.e., consumers derive cognitive, social, and emotional benefits from consuming upcycled products. These benefits mediate the positive effect of upcycled products on purchase intentions. Third, the results suggest that the benefit, which predominantly drives the upcycling effect, depends on the visibility of the upcycled product.

Keywords: *upcycling; upcycled products; sustainability*

Track: Innovation Management & New Product Development