

Psychological Ownership of Access-Based Services

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Abstract

Access-based services—in which consumers do not physically own material goods but gain access to services by registering with the provider—have risen in popularity as an alternative to individual ownership and conventional consumption. Yet, companies still face key challenges in promoting these services. Prior research indicates that consumers assign significant importance to their material possessions; the current study investigates how psychological ownership, or the mental state of perceiving something as one's own, attained through access-based services might lead customers to increase their service use and forgo material ownership and consumption. Using cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental data, as well as combined self-reports with usage data, the authors demonstrate this effect. Firms that offer access-based services can increase customers' service psychological ownership, which acts as a psychological substitute for physical ownership and increases access-based service use.

Keywords: *sharing; material; ownership*

Track: Services Marketing