

“I Like It, But Won’t Be Caught Dead Using It”: Negative Press, Image Concerns, and Post-Purchase Usage

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Abstract

It is well documented that negative reviews can be detrimental to firms, negatively impacting attitudes of potential customers and overall sales. However, little is known about how these same negative reviews influence current owners. Evidence from one field study and three experiments suggests that negative reviews of products lead current owners to avoid further use of those products, even when they are personally satisfied with product performance. Evidence supports the view that this effect is driven by image concerns that using a negatively reviewed product will expose the owner as an incompetent consumer who makes poor consumption decisions. The results suggest that negative product reviews play a broader role than previously thought, one that extends to current owners and the usage life of their products.

Keywords: *Reviews; Usage; Impression-Management*

Track: Consumer Behaviour