

I didn't win! An overlooked downside of crowdsourcing?

Tatiana Karpukhina

WU Vienna

Martin Schreier

WU Vienna

Chris Janiszewski

University of Florida

Hidehiko Nishikawa

Hosei University

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Abstract

This research identifies a surprising downside to using a crowdsourcing contest to generate new product ideas: Participants in an idea generation contest temporarily disengage from the sponsoring brand. When people lose an idea generation contest, the experience of losing negatively affects the participants' future purchase behavior and word-of-mouth. The negative impact of losing can be mitigated by reframing the idea generation contest as a communal activity. Communal framing shifts attention away from losing the contest to collectively creating a superior outcome. Communal framing positively affects the participant's brand engagement, but it does not affect the effort the participant invests in the contest or the quality of the idea the participant submits. The evidence consists of controlled experiments and a field study that measured actual purchase behavior.

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