

Mental Representations of Interactions with Smart Objects before Purchase: An Exploration
of induced Smart Objects Anxiety through Thoughts and Emotions

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Abstract

Whereas the current literature has focused on the relationship between consumers and smart objects after the purchase (Verhoef et al, 2017; Hoffman and Novak, 2018), this research focuses on the consumer-smart object relationship before usage. This research represents the first step of a larger project aiming to build up a smart object anxiety theory anchored in a grounded theory methodology. A projective “Album On-Line” technique is relied on to investigate mental representations of smart objects pre-purchase. The undergone survey examines the affective and cognitive representations of two groups of six respondents (12 respondents) that were submitted to a smart fridge description. Findings suggest that the emergence of anxiety towards smart objects, as a simulated anxiety state, stems from negative emotions linked to the smart object’s capacity to interact and constrain the consumer. An explanation of the phenomenon and a conceptual framework are provided for further investigations.

Keywords: *Smart-Object; Internet-Of-Things; Consumer-Experience*

Track: Consumer Behaviour