

Customer Experience with Augmented Reality Technology in Retailing: (In)authentic Self and Reality versus Curiosity and Fun

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Cite as:

El Shamandi Ahmed Khaled (2021), Customer Experience with Augmented Reality Technology in Retailing: (In)authentic Self and Reality versus Curiosity and Fun. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (94777)

Paper from the 50th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, May 25-28, 2021



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Abstract

Customer experience (CE) exists for years but has seldom gone beyond conceptual work. Similarly, augmented reality (AR) technology in retailing has existed for over a decade but it is still not widely used by customers. Therefore, the aim of this research is to unfold the puzzle between CE and AR by drawing on the literature of CE; authenticity; and the extended self as theoretical frameworks. By employing qualitative methods (interview-diary method and online reviews), the findings are threefold. First, CE with AR can be (in)authentic for both the self and reality which is caused by unrealistic feeling and look, in addition to, technology overhypes. Second, CE with AR is cognitive (i.e., curiosity) and emotional (i.e., fun). Curiosity is caused by the novelty of technology and imagination, whereas fun is caused by frustration and boredom; social interaction; gamification; feeling transformed; and inspiration. Third, it extends our knowledge on CE beyond the conceptual work. These findings contribute to the literature of CE and AR combined, in addition to authenticity, and the extended self literature.

Keywords: *Customer Experience (CE) ; Augmented Reality (AR) ; Authenticity and the Extended Self*

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management