

CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE FACE OF AN OBJECTIVELY SUPERIOR SERVICE
OFFERING: HOW TO REDUCE CUSTOMER SWITCHING

Barbara Duffek

Imperial College Business School

Thomas Foscht

Karl Franzens University of Graz

Andreas Eisingerich

Imperial College Business School

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Abstract

The present study (1) shows how and when brand attachment can defend a service brand against an equivalent and even superior new market entrant; and (2) investigates how individuals' attachment style influence service brand attachment and customer switching. A key managerial takeaway from the current findings is that service brands stand much to gain from exploring enriching benefits to enhance customer loyalty and reduce willingness to switch to an objectively superior competitive offering. The present study also explores a boundary condition to customer loyalty; customers with a dismissive attachment style do not value enriching benefits and will not form brand attachment following strong enriching benefits. Nevertheless, customers with dismissive attachment styles stay loyal to brands that offer strong enabling benefits.

Keywords: *Customer switching; loyalty; attachment style*

Track: Services Marketing