

Consumer perceptions of sustainability labels for alternative consumer networks

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Abstract

Alternative consumer networks can play an important role in sustainable consumption. As ever more consumers worry about the consequences of their consumption behavior, there is an increased need for information. Labels offer consumers an easy way to assess the environmental, social and economic impact. We conducted two cross-sectional studies to explore consumer perceptions of sustainability labels for consumer networks. The results showed that consumers assess labels in a holistic way and do not differentiate between various sustainability dimensions – the better the overall assessment, the higher the perceived sustainability. Any label, whether self-designed or professionally designed, had a positive effect on the intention to buy from a consumer network. Regarding the perceived authenticity of the networks, professional labels seem to work better. This indicates that even self-organized, non-profit consumer networks could benefit from a professionally designed sustainability label.

Keywords: *Sustainability labels; consumer networks; non-profit marketing*

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