

Preventing Cultural Tastes from Losing Popularity

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Abstract

Fashion brands and styles rise and fall in popularity. While marketing scholars have intensely studied adoption, there is little understanding of why such identity-relevant cultural tastes are abandoned. The authors generalize previous research in non-commercial domains to a marketing-relevant domain demonstrating that faster increases in popularity of apparel brands lead to faster abandonment. They develop a theoretical explanation for this phenomenon rooted in identity signaling theories and empirically analyze the role of potential moderators. They find that higher levels of conspicuousness (i.e., brand prominence) reinforce the negative relationship and that higher levels of popularity attenuate it. Brands at lower brand prominence levels can nullify the negative effect of growth rate on decline rate by lowering brand prominence before the peak, but brands at higher levels cannot. The authors discuss contributions to marketing theory and implications for managers and society.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Product Management*

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