

Evaluation of product testing programs as an effective marketing tool - Negative and positive effects of rejections in product testing programs

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Abstract

Product testing programs – defined as marketing programs in which customers apply for receiving a free product in exchange for writing online reviews – have evolved as a popular marketing tool. Companies typically only offer a limited number of free test products and not every applicant can be selected. Analyzing consequences of such rejections by companies is important, since our theoretical analysis, two experimental studies and one field study show both positive and negative consequences of rejecting applicants for companies. On the one hand, compared to non-applicants, rejected participants become skeptical, which decreases their purchase intentions and increase their negative word-of-mouth intentions. On the other hand, rejected applicants feel a higher commitment, which increases their purchase intentions. Further, we identified the price of the test product and the number of rejections as important contextual variables that should be considered.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing, Product Management*

Track: Product and Brand Management