

Spreading Roots: How Making Things Yourself Increases Feelings of Groundedness

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Abstract

Consumers' demand for do-it-yourself (DIY) products and activities is economically substantial, and growing fast. Yet, little is known about the tenets of DIY engagement compared to that of buying ready-made goods. Across seven online, lab, and field studies using diverse product categories and populations, we show that making things yourself reliably increases feelings of groundedness, defined as a state of emotional rootedness. Conversely, the need for groundedness (both dispositional and situational) increases engagement in DIY activities. Additionally, we demonstrate that the need for groundedness is distinct from other needs that affect DIY engagement (i.e., need for competence and need for accomplishment). The last two studies characterize how evoking the realm of self-production enables artisanal brands to generate vicarious feelings of self-production and, in turn, satisfy consumers' need for groundedness. We offer implications for brand positioning and consumer wellbeing.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Customer Satisfaction and Delight*

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