

# Quid Pro Quo: Being Observed by Companies Decreases Customer Engagement

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## **Abstract**

This research aims to provide insights regarding the influence of the use of digital technologies in the marketplace on customer engagement. Across seven studies, we show that the perception of being observed triggered by the data collection practices of companies decreases customer engagement. Consumers become reluctant to engage with a company, share information, spend time or money on the products or services, and support its causes when they are being observed by the company. This effect is driven by a desire to protect one's resources. As being observed implies the utilization of one's data resources without reciprocity, consumers become more protective of their available resources when they are being observed by companies. The effect can be attenuated with interventions that can change the perceived reciprocity during the interaction.

**Subject Areas:** *Consumer Behaviour, Information Processing*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour