

Inclusive Design and Brand Allyship for Stigmatized Consumers

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Abstract

Brands have recently started engaging in marketing for stigmatized consumers to show their support and allyship in their struggles. However, such marketing efforts are sometimes perceived as woke washing, especially from the side of stigmatized customers. This research tests whether focusing on inclusive design for overlooked consumers and donations to stigmatized identity related charities (a form of brand allyship) in the marketing communication enhances attitudes of marginalized customers to the product, the brand, and the promotion message. The conducted experimental study with LGBTQIA+ customers shows that emphasizing inclusive design narratives is more instrumental in cultivating positive attitudes from stigmatized consumers, rather than focusing on brand allyship. This effect is further mediated by brand-self connection. Furthermore, this study explores the difference in attitudes of trans/non-binary consumers and cis LGBTQIA+ members.

Subject Areas: *Advertising, Attitude, Consumer Behaviour*

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics