

From brand love to divorce: how consumer-brand relationships end

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the divorce path of the relationships between consumers and their loved brands from the consumers' perspectives. To achieve this, we conducted 20 in-depth interviews with photo-elicitation and graphic sketches. Participants described their trajectories from beginning to end, both narrative and graphically. Textual data was analyzed using content analysis, and sketches were grouped based on similar patterns, uncovering five divorce trajectories: 'Ultimatum', 'Erratic healing', 'Summer love', 'Leap of faith', and 'Downhill'. We also observed important aspects associated with different developments, such as motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) and willingness to forgive. Our findings unveil different processes experienced by consumers and offer contributions for managing consumer-brand relationships and divorce, more specifically.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Consumer Behaviour, Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction*

Track: Product and Brand Management