

Managing Feedback Effects: Co-Branded vs. Non-Co-Branded Extensions

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Abstract

Category extensions can enhance the likelihood of new product acceptance and indirectly influence attitudes toward the existing brand through feedback effects. This study investigates how two category extension strategies (non-co-branded and co-branded) impact the feedback effect on the existing brand, differentiating between new and current customers. Using an experimental design ($n = 774$), we examine a category extension by a sports team brand (soccer club Borussia Mönchengladbach) into e-sports (League of Legends). Our results reveal that for new customers, a category extension without a co-brand does not affect their attitude towards the existing brand, while the inclusion of a co-brand (e-sports brand Fnatic) results in a positive attitude change. In contrast, for current customers, the category extension reduces their attitude towards the existing brand without a co-brand, while a co-branded extension strategy mitigates the negative feedback effect.

Keywords: *Brand extension, Co-branding, Enabler*

Track: Product and Brand Management