

Competing with Creators: How Price Fairness Drives Consumer Preferences

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Abstract

With the rise of the creator economy, business models are evolving, and companies are now competing not only with each other but also with individual creators who sell products directly to consumers. This research investigates how consumer perceptions of price fairness differ when purchasing from individual creators versus traditional businesses. Across four experimental studies and various products we show that consumers prefer products created by peers, with perceived price fairness serving as a key mechanism driving this preference. We test alternative explanations, such as perceived uniqueness and perceived quality (Study 2) and the influence of company size and creator gender (Study 3). Furthermore, this effect persists when price increases are attributed to higher costs affecting creators and companies alike (Study 4). Together, these findings highlight the role of creator type in shaping consumer perceptions and offer insights into the dynamics of price fairness.

Keywords: *creator economy, price fairness, peer-to-peer consumption*

Track: Consumer Behavior