

How Shopping Clubs Work: Differential Effects of Nudges Across the Customer Decision Journey

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Abstract:

Online shopping clubs are e-commerce communities that offer members exclusive access to discounted sales campaigns by creating a competitive yet engaging shopping environment using scarcity and social proof nudges. Despite their growing popularity, comprehensive research on the effectiveness of this business model remains scarce. While prior experimental studies focus on the short-term impact of such campaign nudges, the effects of combining multiple nudges repeatedly on marketing outcomes across the whole customer journey remain unclear. Using a unique dataset of customer responses to about 27,000 campaigns from a fashion shopping club, we find differential effects of campaign nudges on purchase stages: While they boost purchase decisions in earlier funnel stages, they can also increase return rates, suggesting post-purchase regret. These findings highlight the need for a nuanced approach in managing shopping clubs to achieve both short-term and long-term marketing goals.

Keywords: Scarcity, social proof, customer journey

Track: Advertising & Marketing Communication