Art or asset? How creator orientation and consumer motivations jointly shape value perceptions in NFT retailing

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Abstract

This research examines how creators' artistic orientation influences consumer responses to NFT-based digital artwork. Across six studies using online experiments, laboratory data, biometric measures, a discrete choice experiment, and marketplace evidence, we show that creators who emphasize intrinsic artistic motives increase purchase intentions, perceived art quality, and emotional engagement. These effects depend on consumers' motivational focus: hedonic consumers prefer high artistic orientation, while utilitarian consumers respond more positively to commercially framed creators. Marketplace data confirm that mixing artistic and commercial cues reduces performance, highlighting the importance of consistent creator signaling. Together, the findings identify artistic orientation as a key value driver in NFT retailing and clarify how creator signals and consumer motivation jointly shape value creation in digital art markets.

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