

Me, Myself, and Others: Augmented Reality Increases Public Self-Consciousness and Socially Desirable Choices

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Abstract

Firms in e-commerce are increasingly adopting augmented reality (AR) to enhance consumers' online shopping experiences. What sets AR apart is that it enables consumers to virtually embed products into their personal space or onto themselves. Unlike with any other technology, consumers themselves become part of the actual product presentation in AR. More specifically, AR changes the perspective that consumers typically have in online shopping, from a typical first-person view to a third-person perspective. This change in perspective can have a crucial impact on how consumers evaluate and choose products when using AR. Across four experiments we propose and demonstrate that when consumers use AR they have heightened thoughts as to how others will perceive them and become more public self-conscious. This heightened public self-consciousness, in turn, leads consumers to buy more socially desirable products (e.g., mainstream brands, fair-trade, etc.).

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media