

Virtually Unique? How Virtual Try-On Drives Purchase Intentions

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Abstract

This study examines how virtual try-on drives purchase intention through model self-congruity, the degree to which the virtual model aligns with a consumer's self-image. The findings show that virtual try-on significantly increases purchase intention, with model self-congruity acting as a complementary mediator. All three dimensions of consumer need for uniqueness strengthen this effect, as consumers high in need for uniqueness experience greater self-congruity from virtual try-on. Theoretically, this study extends self-congruity theory to digital retail and identifies need for uniqueness as a boundary condition. Practically, it highlights the importance of personalization strategies that enhance engagement, drive conversion and reduce returns. We make three key contributions. First, link virtual try-on to purchase intention via self-congruity, second, identify need for uniqueness as a key consumer trait, and third, offer actionable store design guidance for retailer on virtual try-on.

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management