Restraint on Black Friday: An Investigation into Consumer Motivations for Participating in “Buy Nothing Day”: An Abstract

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Abstract A large body of literature exists on understanding various consumer resistance movements. However, the question of why everyday consumers engage in consumption restraint has received little attention in the scholarly discourse to date. In this study, we investigate the motivations of people who participate in “Buy Nothing Day,” the annual day of consumption restraint that corresponds with Black Friday. To do this, we examine 1813 consumer tweets referring to this event. Consumer motivations were categorized as relating to consumerism, spiritual welfare, wastefulness, environment, inequality, anti-capitalism, financial responsibility, and financial necessity. Of these, consumerism and spiritual welfare were the most common motivators. In addition, most consumers conveyed positive sentiments toward this event.

Our findings shed light on motivations that average consumers may have to restrain their consumption and provide insight for firms wishing to better understand and respond to this type of individual.

References Available Upon Request

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