

Consumer-Brand Engagement: Toward a Comprehensive Theoretical Framework

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Abstract Consumer-brand engagement (CBE) is a recent concept in the marketing literature expanding the domain of relationship marketing. CBE has been seen by both academics and practitioners as a fundamental driver of the consumer decision-making process. Our study was aimed at drafting a first ecological foundation of the CBE construct. Our research aims were: (1) to identify the constitutive dimensions of CBE and how they relate with one another (i.e. social interactions; emotional and cognitive clues; brand-related behaviors) from a twofold consumers' and practitioners' perspective; (2) to detect the evolutionary phases of the CBE process. Our findings reveal that, to become “engaging” a brand should be carrier of a meaningful psychological bond thanks to the synergistic interlacement of four experiential dimensions: hedonic, existential, eudaimonic and interpersonal. These four experiential dimensions are crucial to allow for the building of a “covenant” between consumers and their brands that triggers a CBE bond. The nature and the emotional essence of this covenant seems to evolve with the time passing by and the increase in the touch-points between consumers and brands. More specifically, the CBE experience seems to develop in three subsequent phases, marked by the progressive synergistic intensification of the four experiential dimensions.

Keywords Consumer brand engagement • Grounded theory • Consumer brand relationships

References

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