

A CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE ON MASS CUSTOMIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the influence of individual differences in need for optimization (NFO), centrality of visual product aesthetics (CVPA), and consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) on perceived value of customized product alternatives. A conceptual model grounded in involvement theory, the functional theory of attitudes, and theories on the desirability of uniqueness is proposed and empirically tested using survey methodology. Generally, data support significant relationships between the three individual differences and the perceived value of mass customized products. Further, support is provided for the mediating role of involvement in the functional and symbolic benefits for a given product category. Results of the study extend consumer research on individual differences into a new domain of consumer behavior and hold implications for segmenting mass customization markets.