Abstract

Group marketing, which uses the psychological mechanisms underlying groups to drive behaviors that benefit the firm, is predicated on the influence that groups exert over their members’ behavior. Two key factors can help resolve some of the conflicting findings regarding the dynamics of this group influence. Specifically, this research untangles informational and identity mechanisms that determine group influence and identifies time in a purchase domain as a critical determinant of the strength of group influence. Previous research suggests that social influence diminishes over time, yet two laboratory experiments and a longitudinal field study reveal that this assumption of diminishing group influence over time holds only when the informational mechanism dominates; the opposite effect arises when an identity mechanism dominates. Finally, group status strengthens, but product price weakens, the effects of groups on purchase behaviors.

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All interested are welcome.