

Abstract

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Faithful and satisfied? Consumers' loyalty to grocery stores

This study relates consumers' reasoning about "loyalty to grocery stores", i.e. what it means and how relevant it is to them, to measurements of their level of loyalty.

Interviews were conducted with 35 consumers from different grocery store formats. Each respondent also completed a questionnaire in connection with the interview.

The thesis shows that consumers perceive that loyalty to grocery stores means action rather than thoughts and feelings. The functional arguments are more important than loyalty understood as close relationships or identification with a store. Despite consumers' different views of the personal relevance of expressing loyalty to grocery stores, the concept of loyalty appears to be relevant enough to be useful for describing consumers' relationships with grocery stores.

The loyalty indicators show that loyalty to grocery stores is a relatively distanced and individual phenomenon, which does not imply a high involvement in one's store. The thesis has also demonstrated that consumer-specific factors (e.g. stress) can be as important as store-related factors (e.g. satisfaction) for consumers' level of perceived loyalty.

Key words: consumers, customers, loyalty, grocery stores

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