

# People more likely to enjoy new phone if expectations favorable, study finds

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The more a user expects to like using a new mobile phone, the more he will like to use it. According to Helsinki Institute for Information Technology HIIT researchers, users' favorable expectations make them forgive encountered usability problems and perceive new mobile phones usable.

In an experiment by Eeva Raita and Antti Oulasvirta, subjects read either a positive or a negative product review for a novel [mobile phone](#) before using it. After reading the review, subjects performed either easy or hard task with the phone, and then rated its' usability with a standard questionnaire. The study revealed a strong effect of positive expectations: The subjects who had read the positive review gave the phone 74% higher usability ratings than others - even when they had great trouble using it.

The researchers highlight that expectations might influence users' product perceptions more than they acknowledge. New devices are often bought without first-hand knowledge forcing users to trust advertisements, brands, word of mouth, product reviews and discussion forums. The study reveals that these expectations influence users' perceptions strongly also after purchase making users forgive usability problems to a device they have expected to be good. While the effect of expectations on short-term formation of perceptions are evidently strong, Raita and Oulasvirta are now running more studies to explore the effect of expectations in a more long-term use.

The study, titled "Too Good To Be Bad: The Effect of Favorable Expectations on Usability Perceptions" will be published at the proceedings of the 54th annual meeting of *Human Factors and Ergonomics Society* (HFES) held in San Francisco next week.

Provided by Aalto University

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