

Marketing an innovative new product? An exciting product launch could hurt sales

October 14 2014

Should every successful product launch involve some sort of dazzling spectacle? A new study in the *Journal of Consumer Research* tells us that this might be a great way to market an upgrade, but a flashy launch could backfire if a new product is truly innovative.

"The accepted wisdom is that [consumers](#) get excited about new and unique products they cannot immediately understand. However, these feelings of excitement can quickly change to tension and anxiety if we can't ultimately make sense of what a product does, especially if we are in a stimulating retail environment," write authors Theodore J. Noseworthy (York University), Fabrizio Di Muro (University of Winnipeg), and Kyle B. Murray (University of Alberta).

To understand the role of anxiety in the acceptance of new technology, the authors designed three studies based on existing research on innovative products like the Dyson Bladeless fan and Google Glass. In one study, consumers were asked to remain inactive, complete a moderate workout, or complete an intense aerobic workout. Everyone was then shown three different ads for the same product where the combination of text and photos either made sense, somewhat made sense, or were completely unrelated.

Consumers who had been inactive were less anxious and better able to accept and understand the completely unrelated ad than consumers in the other two groups. Consumers who had completed a moderate workout preferred the ad that somewhat made sense, while consumers who had

completed an intense aerobic workout had negative feelings toward all three ads.

These findings run counter to the common practice of creating exciting rollouts for new high-tech products. Companies should seek a balance between creating the right amount of product hype and knowing how much excitement consumers can handle.

"Creating excitement around the launch of a mainstream product can be a good idea, but it may completely backfire when something is truly innovative. One of the most effective ways to launch a highly innovative product may just be to help consumers relax," the authors conclude.

Provided by University of Chicago

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