

New approach may help companies retain sports brand consumers

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Amid the global pandemic, an increasing number of people turned to golf for a socially distanced outdoor activity.

With new consumers joining the party, growing a loyal customer base largely relies on [brand](#) managers understanding brand experience. Mi Ryoung Chung, assistant teaching professor in FIU's Department of Counseling, Recreation, and School Psychology and Jon Welty Peachey from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign led a study examining the relationship between brand experience and [customer satisfaction](#) for golf club products.

"Brand experience has been looked at a lot, but not much in [sports](#)," said Chung, a former pro-South Korean golfer who points out this is one of the first brand studies of its kind for sports products. "People who play sports, it affects them differently."

The researchers collected responses through online surveys from 386 golf players. The results revealed that experiencing one brand can influence a golfer's uncertainty toward other brands. However, that does not translate into satisfaction or loyalty to the brand they experienced. Previous research suggests brand experience should influence satisfaction and loyalty, but when it comes to golf products, the researchers say golfers seem to buck that trend.

The findings are significant for sports marketing practitioners as the study explores an alternative marketing approach for brand differentiation that has the potential to attract and retain more customers. In the case of [golf](#) products, while brand experience may not increase satisfaction, it can alleviate or eliminate uncertainty.

"The less uncertainty you have toward a brand, you will tend to be more inclined to buy that brand over time," Chung said. "It was interesting to find that even if you try a product, it doesn't lead to satisfaction."

There is a need for more research on sports products, according to Chung. Future research should be conducted to understand the

consequences of brand experience in the sports context.

This study was published in *Sport, Business and Management*.

More information: Mi Ryoung Chung et al, The influence of brand experience on satisfaction, uncertainty and brand loyalty: a focus on the golf club industry, *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal* (2021). [DOI: 10.1108/SBM-11-2020-0115](https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-11-2020-0115)

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