

# Purpose beyond profit: How brands can benefit consumer well-being

September 10 2022

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Researchers from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt University have published a new paper in the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* that offers fresh insights into "brand purpose" and its potential benefits to consumers.

The article, "Conceptualizing [brand](#) purpose and considering its implications for consumer eudaimonic well-being," is authored by Patti Williams, Jennifer Edson Escalas, and Andrew Morningstar.

In response to industry reports, apparent consumer demand, and high-profile calls from top executives including BlackRock Chairman and CEO Larry Fink, brands have publicly begun pursuing purpose beyond profit. Brands in a wide variety of categories have sought to define, articulate, communicate, and act according to their "brand purpose."

The authors define brand purpose as a brand's long-term aim central to "identity, meaning structure and strategy" that leads to productive engagement with some aspect of the world beyond profit.

This research team explores the different types of well-being consumers may experience by engaging with brands they believe reflect their own values. Specifically, they focus on *eudaimonia*, a feeling of fulfillment resulting from living a meaningful life, contributing meaningfully to society, and acting in alignment with moral virtues.

Their framework cites five mediating factors that affect the relationship between brand purpose and consumer well-being: consumer purpose, meaning and significance, self-acceptance/achievement of true self, positive relationships, and other-praising emotions.

The article suggests that, if a brand adequately addresses moderating factors, the [potential benefits](#) to consumers and marketers are

considerable. These factors include consumer trust, brand authenticity, brand credibility, commitment to purpose, consumer-value congruence, and brand-purpose proximity. While consumers may gain a vital sense of well-being; marketers, may secure positive brand judgements, brand loyalty, and brand evangelism.

"The ultimate goal of our review," the authors write, "is to guide future consumer psychology research into brand purpose, a concept that we believe may have a transformative impact on business, [consumers](#), and society.

**More information:** Patti Williams et al, Conceptualizing brand purpose and considering its implications for consumer eudaimonic well-being, *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1002/jcpy.1324](#)

Provided by Society for Consumer Psychology

Citation: Purpose beyond profit: How brands can benefit consumer well-being (2022, September 10) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2022-09-purpose-profit-brands-benefit-consumer.html>

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