

The Effect of Past Behavior on Variety Seeking: Automatic and Deliberative Influences

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Consumers often make multiple purchases of products to use over a period of time. In doing so, they sometimes choose their most preferred option for use on each occasion. In other cases, however, they are likely to distribute their choices over several alternatives. Each of these activities involves the use of a particular decision strategy. Will the consumers' application of the strategies in one product domain affect their purchase behavior in other domains? We suggest that although applying a strategy in one situation can increase its accessibility and lead consumers to spontaneously apply it again in a subsequent situation, this effect may disappear or be reversed if consumers deliberately consider it (either because it is called explicitly to their attention or? because of the feelings of boredom it elicits). Three studies examined the conditions in which these spontaneous and deliberative processes exert an influence on variety seeking.