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The IKEA Effect: When Labor Leads to Love

by Michael I. Norton, Daniel Mochon and Dan Ariely

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Abstract

In four studies in which consumers assembled IKEA boxes, folded origami, and built sets of Legos, we demonstrate and investigate boundary conditions for the IKEA effect—the increase in valuation of self-made products. Participants saw their amateurish creations as similar in value to experts' creations, and expected others to share their opinions. We show that labor leads to love only when labor results in successful completion of tasks; when participants built and then destroyed their creations, or failed to complete them, the IKEA effect dissipated. Finally, we show that labor increases valuation for both "do-it-yourselfers" and novices.

Keywords: Demand and Consumers; Product; Valuation; Labor;

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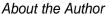
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