

Knowing where an upcycled product comes from makes you more likely to buy it

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Customers are more likely to buy upcycled and recycled items if they know the product's origin, finds new research from Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU).

According to the study, led by Bernadette Kamleitner, a Professor at WU's Institute for Marketing and Consumer Research, demand for upcycled and recycled products increases if the origin of the products is emphasised.

"The previous identity of a product can make buyers think about the product's history and create a sense of owning something unique," said Kamleitner.

"Marketing specialists can help customers realise that repurposed products are special by emphasising the products' previous identities. This works even if it means telling customers that the products were made from trash," she added.

Together with her team, Kamleitner, conducted three field experiments and four controlled experiments.

Alongside finding that demand for upcycled goods increases with knowledge of the product's previous life, she also found that the strategy of emphasising a product's former identity must be very well crafted in the case of products whose prior history is clearly visible.

The paper, A Cinderella Story: How Past Identity Salience Boosts Demand for Repurposed Products, was published in the Journal of Marketing, and can be accessed here (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022242919872156>).

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For more information, or to speak to Bernadette Kamleitner, contact Jonny Stone at jonny@bluesky-pr.com or call 01582 790704.