

## JILTING EFFECT IN CUSTOMIZATION SYSTEMS CAUSED BY MASS CONFUSION

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### ABSTRACT

Many manufacturers introduce mass customization systems via Internet, in which they match their products to each consumer's individual needs. Mass customization allows customers to order their own products from abundant choices. However, on the other hand, customers sometimes abandon customization due to “mass confusion”, caused by the complexity of selecting maximal solutions. To solve the problem, some firms recently offer “hybrid system” in which they offer not only customized products, but also ready-made products. Using the new system, they expected that customers who find that they are less satisfied with any ready-made products move into the customization system, whereas customers who find that they get confused in the customized system get back to the ready-made products. But, based on the new notion of “jilting” effect, customers may not come back to any products under the same brand as the customized products. In this paper, we conduct five studies to investigate the issue. The results show that consumers incline to switch their brands even to less attractive brands when they try to order an aspirant customized product but fail it due to “mass confusion”.

**Keywords:** mass customization, jilt, aspirant choice, hybrid system, brand switching

References are available upon request.

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