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Brand-Extended Self-Construal

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Recent research suggests consumers view brands anthropomorphically and often form self-connections with a particular brand. To date, however, no research has explored whether consumers vary with regard to their tendency to form such connections. In the current research, we conceptualize Brand-Extended Self-Construal (BESC) as the propensity for a consumer to include important brands as part of the self-concept. After developing a reliable and valid measure of the construct, we provide experimental evidence for the value of BESC as a consumer tendency. In a series of studies, we show that a consumer's generalized tendency to form connections with brands meaningfully influences important aspects of brand attitudes and loyalty. Implications for brand management and future research regarding BESC are provided.