

MARKETING COLLOQUIA

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BECAUSE WE'RE PARTNERS: HOW SOCIAL VALUES AND RELATIONSHIP NORMS INFLUENCE CONSUMER PAYMENTS IN PAY-WHAT-YOU-WANT CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT: This research identifies individual difference and contextual factors that systematically influence consumers' payments in Pay What You Want (PWYW) contexts. Using both hypothetical and real purchases, the findings show that consumers' Social Value Orientation (SVO) influences payments as does the degree to which exchange or communal relationship norms are salient for the buyer when the pricing decision is made. The findings further show that norm salience moderates the effect of SVO on payments. When exchange norms are salient, pro-self buyers pay less than their prosocial counterparts. However, when communal norms are salient, pro-selfs pay more than they do when exchange norms are salient, and the difference in payment between them and pro-socials is attenuated. This change in payment behavior is partially mediated by a shift in buyers' motivation to accrue benefits for themselves versus to show concern for the seller. Finally, this research shows that sellers can influence communal norm salience in specific ways, which then influences buyers' payment behavior.