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Checking Current Status More Frequently Decreases Satisfaction

ABSTRACT:

Across eleven studies, we find that checking the current status of a desired outcome more frequently (vs. less frequently) undermines satisfaction. We suggest this occurs because consumers are overly optimistic each time they receive feedback on an outcome's current status; they typically expect better intermediary outcomes than they receive. This leads consumers to experience more disappointment, ultimately reducing their subjective evaluation of their final outcome. Our findings deepen our understanding of the consequences and the psychology of tracking desired outcomes and have important implications for how companies should design tracking technologies to optimize customer satisfaction.