

**TO DO OR TO HAVE, MORE OR LESS: NEW INSIGHTS FROM  
QUANTITATIVE REVIEWS OF THE EXPERIENTIAL ADVANTAGE AND THE USE  
OF SCARCITY TACTICS IN MARKETING**

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## **CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP**

I, Belinda Louise Barton, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the Marketing Discipline Group, Faculty of Business, at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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For Lucy.

The format of this thesis is by compilation.

Paper One: Barton, Belinda, Tom van Laer and Natalina Zlatevska, “The Experiential Advantage: A Meta-Analysis of the Processes, Outcomes, and Moderators of Consuming Experiences.” invited for second round revision at *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Paper Two: Barton, Belinda, Natalina Zlatevska and Harmen Oppewal, “Scarcity Tactics in Marketing: A Meta-Analysis of Product Scarcity Effects on Consumer Value Perceptions and Behavioral Intentions.” under review at the *Journal of Retailing*.

## Table of Contents

Abstract	vii
Chapter One	1
Introduction	2
References	10
Chapter Two	12
Paper One: <i>“The Experiential Advantage: A Meta-Analysis of the Processes, Outcomes, and Moderators of Consuming Experiences.”</i>	13
Appendices	65
References	71
Chapter Three	81
Paper Two: <i>“Scarcity Tactics in Marketing: A Meta-Analysis of Product Scarcity Effects on Consumer Value Perceptions and Behavioral Intentions.”</i>	82
Appendices	126
References	137
Chapter Four	143
Conclusion	144
References	147

## ABSTRACT

Is it possible to buy happiness? Prior research suggests that shifting discretionary spending from material goods such as clothes, to experiences such as concerts, will bring greater happiness, satisfaction, and overall wellbeing. Other research provides evidence for the benefits of purchasing and consuming material goods rather than experiences. Using a theory driven meta-analysis of 412 effect sizes, paper one shows that there is an hedonic advantage to consuming experiences rather than material goods. Paper two then explores how a common marketing tactic – scarcity – influences consumer attitudes and behaviour. Using commodity theory as the overarching framework to integrate more than fifty years of research into the psychological effects of scarcity, a meta-analysis of 416 effect sizes highlights that not all scarcity tactics are equal. Rather, the size of scarcity’s effect on value depends on a number of moderating factors including the source of the scarcity, product benefits, how the scarcity cue is communicated, and level of involvement with the product. Together these two quantitative reviews synthesize piecemeal literature examining two of the existing debates in contemporary consumer research. That is, what people should spend their money on when seeking to maximise happiness and wellbeing, and how scarcity tactics influence decision-making when consumers make choices from the abundance of options available in the marketplace.