

## **Motivating Consumers via Goal Enabling Technology: The Role of Goal Setting Characteristics**

Increasingly, consumers are focusing on improving their physical, mental, social, or financial well-being. Service providers in this space have responded by introducing goal enabling technologies (GETs) that allow their customers to define and track specific goals when using the service. The popularity of GETs is based on the assumption that enabling customers to set service-specific goals can improve value for the customer and the service provider. However, past research paints a more complex picture, highlighting the benefits but also the drawbacks of goal setting. Firms, therefore, need to know whether their assumption about GETs holds and whether customers need guardrails when adopting them. We use panel data from an investment services provider that introduced a GET to examine how customers who specified goals with the GET changed their behavior. We leverage a synthetic control structural matching method to enable the estimation of changes in customer behavior for customers who adopted the GET to set goals, relative to a comparable control group of customers who did not. The results indicate that, on average, GET adoption increases customers' goal-congruent behavior. However, this impact depends on several goal-setting characteristics at the time of adoption, namely goal difficulty, achievement motivation, and pre-commitment.