

News consumption on social media: When do we actually read the news that we like?

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Cite as:

Bublitz Andrea, Scherer Anne, Algesheimer René (2019), News consumption on social media: When do we actually read the news that we like?. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 48th, (9782)

Paper presented at the 48th Annual EMAC Conference, Hamburg, May 24-27, 2019.



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Abstract

Today, individuals read and share news content on social media on a daily basis. Individual decisions to like drive news diffusion in the aggregate. This research determines the conditions under which likes are given uninformed, i.e. without reading content thoroughly. Results show that in order to deal with the increasing information load individuals often skim surrogates of content instead of reading content thoroughly. Afterwards, they feel better informed than they objectively are. The public relevance of a post is further perceived as a quality measure of content such that individuals tend to read popular content less thoroughly and rely more on the surrogates of content. However, this effect of public relevance is shown to be weaker when content is personally relevant. Results further show that the impact of objective attention to a news post on the decision to like the post is completely mediated by perceived attention.

Keywords: *Consumer behaviour; News consumption; Social media*

Track: Consumer Behaviour