

Sharing through interacting: the role of interactivity in customer engagement with online sharing platform

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Abstract

Collaborative tourism presents a rich opportunity to understand tourist satisfaction with online sharing platforms. Recent literature suggests that sharing platforms are ideal environments for peer-to-peer engagement while traveling, and increasing attention is being given to the role of “customer engagement” in the co-creation of customer experiences on sharing platforms. Despite this interest, systematic scholarly inquiry into customer engagement in collaborative tourism has been limited to date. This research explores customer engagement with sharing platforms on collaborative tourism, drawing on literature about interactivity to examine how four facets (synchronicity, two-way communication, consumer participation, and joint problem solving) affect customer engagement. A quantitative study using an online sharing platform (Airbnb) and empirical data from 332 participants was conducted. Results found significant relationship between the four facets and different dimensions of engagement. Additionally, we found that engaged customers exhibited enhanced satisfaction regarding the sharing platform. Our findings reveal a complex, multidimensional nature of cognition-based, emotion-based, and behavior-based customer engagement, achieved through the four facets of interactivity. The findings also provide new insights for marketers and platform providers on designing online sharing platform.

Keywords: *sharing platform; customer engagement; interactivity*

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