

When technology fails: rage against the machine or self-control? Investigating customers' negative emotions and coping strategies in artificial intelligence based service failure

Giulia Pavone

Toulouse School of Management Research-UMR 5303 CNRS University Toulouse 1 Capitole

Andreas Munzel

Université de Montpellier

Lars Meyer-Waarden

Toulouse School of Management Research -CNRS University Toulouse 1 Capitole

Cite as:

Pavone Giulia, Munzel Andreas, Meyer-Waarden Lars (2021), When technology fails: rage against the machine or self-control? Investigating customers' negative emotions and coping strategies in artificial intelligence based service failure. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (94301)

Paper from the 50th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, May 25-28, 2021



When technology fails: rage against the machine or self-control? Investigating customers' negative emotions and coping strategies in artificial intelligence based service failure

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of service failures and the recovery management on customers' anger, frustration and coping strategies, when interacting with an artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbot compared to a human agent. By applying a between subject experimental design in the airline industry, results show that in the same aversive situation, emotional responses differ when the customer is aware of interacting with a chatbot rather than a human. When interacting with a chatbot, customers experience higher frustration due to the lack of perceived power. Moreover, they tend to blame more the firm for the aversive situation, increasing the negative word of mouth. The research suggests that customers tend to adopt confrontative coping strategies both when interacting with a chatbot and with a human to regulate negative emotions. This result is in line with CASA theory, which suggests that individuals apply the same human social rules to interactions with machines.

Keywords: *service failure; artificial intelligence; customers' emotional responses*

Track: Services Marketing