

Scarcity Meets AI: The Power of Message Type and Source in Online Booking

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Abstract

The scarcity effect is a well-known marketing tactic that creates urgency by signaling limited supply or high demand. While online booking agencies (OTAs) employ supply- and demand-based scarcity messages, their effectiveness varies. In persuasive communication, the source plays a pivotal role. Thus, as AI becomes increasingly integrated into marketing, understanding its influence compared to traditional sources like OTAs is essential for evaluating message effectiveness. This study examines how scarcity message type (supply vs. demand) and source (AI vs. OTA) influence consumer responses. A 2×2 between-subjects experiment (N=211) revealed that supply-based messages from OTAs significantly impacted both perceived value and booking intention. Demand-based messages increased perceived value but showed weaker behavioral influence. Notably, the AI + demand condition increased booking intention without affecting perceived value. This study demonstrates that the persuasive impact of perceived scarcity is not uniform but depends on the message source and the message type.

Track: Marketing and Technology Interaction