

Consumer reactions to conflict management in non-profit online communities

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Abstract

A recent investigation in online consumer environments has been the management of hostile consumer-to-consumer interactions (here referred to as ‘consumer-to-consumer (C2C) conflicts’) on organisation-hosted online communities. Few existing studies have so far exclusively focused on understanding what conflict management strategies online community hosts use. In contrast, the present study proposes to advance this knowledge by testing the effect of conflict management on the consumers participating in non-profit online communities. This is done following a two-step approach. In Study 1, we conducted a netnographic study of PETA’s online community on Facebook that revealed five conflict management strategies. In Study 2, we investigated consumer reactions to the identified conflict management strategies via an online experiment. The results showed that consumer attitudes and perceptions vary depending on the type of strategy adopted.

Keywords: *conflict management; social media; mixed methods*

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics