

Technology-Infused Frontline Interactions – Would You Rather Forgive Susi than Siri in Case of a Service Failure?

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Abstract

New forms of technology-driven communication channels are shaping the service landscape as more organizations are looking to automate services with intelligent agents. The goal of this study is to better understand the effects of human presence on service outcomes after a service failure. We run an online experiment to test the effects of different interaction types (human-computer, technology-mediated and human-human) on perceived advice quality and process satisfaction across outcome scenarios. In a technology-mediated interaction, the employee is equipped with a technological device. We find that a technology-mediated interaction leads to more favorable customer service outcomes compared to a human-human interaction. We also find that the negative impact after a service failure is higher for technology-mediated interactions compared to human-human interactions. For managers, the results demonstrate the importance of service strategy adaptability after a service failure.

Keywords: *Automated; Agents; Experiment*

Track: Services Marketing