

# PERSONAL VS. COMMERCIAL PEER SERVICE PROVIDERS

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## **Abstract**

The focus of the sharing economy in tourism (Airbnb) has shifted recently from personal peer providers (i.e., individuals that rent a room) to commercial peer providers (i.e., companies that manage several Airbnb lodgings). While prior research encourages peer service providers (Airbnb hosts) to focus on social interactions, the literature remains silent on how consumers respond to the social dimension across the two peer provider types (personal versus commercial provider). Two experimental studies (n=600) reveal that consumers exhibit higher loyalty towards personal providers when they focus on communal norms and this effect is driven via empathy. Study 2 examines the moderating effect of perceived warmth. We reveal that this effect backfires when personal (commercial) peers are not social. That is, the social aspect of Airbnb providers critically depends on relationship norms (personal versus commercial host).

**Keywords:** *Communal norms ; Empathy; Loyalty*

**Track:** Tourism Marketing