

“Sign me!”: The influence of online petitions design on signing behaviour

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Abstract

This communication questions the Internet user’s responses to the design elements of an online petition. This research aims to propose a typology of the elements of an online petition and to determine their influence on the Internet user’s responses. A mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methodology has been adopted. We present a typology of the elements of online petitions in four categories: informative, aesthetic, social and functional. Responses were identified for each element. Then, we made hypotheses on the influence of elements which can be modified by the petition author on signing behaviour. These hypotheses were tested by quantitative research that verified the positive influence of the author’s image, text, typography, and presentation on signing behaviour, as well as the negative influence of ad hominem attacks. These findings have theoretical, managerial, and societal implications.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Intention-Behavior Link, Public Policy*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media