

Persuasive effects of emotional and unemotional social media responses to offensive marketing

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Persuasive effects of emotional and unemotional social media responses to offensive marketing

Abstract

This research investigates the impact of emotional expressions in the persuasiveness of social media complaints toward offensive marketing. It explores how the emotional tone of complaints (angry, humorous, and unemotional) affects the support of observing consumers. Findings across three studies suggest unemotional complaints are consistently effective across contexts. In contrast, expressed anger and humor can backfire, making observers favor the offending brand more. These outcomes are explained by the perceived appropriateness of the complaints and moderated by the offense severity and whether the complainants are victims of the marketing offense or allies. This research provides insights as to how consumers can amplify the impact of their social media complaints to gain support against offensive marketing. Thus, contributing to the existing literature on consumer complaints and activism.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Information Processing*

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics