AI Augmented Reality Digital Assistants: How using an anthropomorphized digital assistant influences phygital service experiences

Hannah Marriott
Cardiff University
Graeme McLean
University of Strathclyde
Jennifer Barhorst
College of Charleston

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Abstract

Digital assistants (DAs; e.g., Apple's Siri) and Augmented Reality (AR; e.g., Pokémon Go) are two forms of AI technology that have seen substantial growth over the past few years, with future demand and investments projected to increase. The aim of this study is to examine phygital service experiences through augmented reality digital assistants (ARDAs). Through developing an ARDA app, our research develops understanding into how AI-enabled ARDAs influence the phygital service experience based on the level of anthropomorphism (through perceived physical presence of humans vs. robots) experienced by consumers. Although experimental data shows that there are no differences between robot vs. human ARDAs on overall phygital service experience, this work finds that ARDAs are powerful service enhancement tools through provision of a personified assistant experience, regardless of their aesthetic. This research contributes to theory and practice and highlights further directions.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Services, Service Marketing*

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