

Whirlwind warnings: Factors driving consumers to engage in negative eWOM towards brand activism on social media.

Ursula Haas-Kotzegger

University of Applied Sciences CAMPUS 02

Elena Wibmer

University of Applied Sciences CAMPUS 02

René Kerschbaumer

CAMPUS 02 University of Applied Sciences

Dietmar Kappel

CAMPUS 02 University of Applied Sciences

Cite as:

Haas-Kotzegger Ursula, Wibmer Elena, Kerschbaumer René, Kappel Dietmar (2024), Whirlwind warnings: Factors driving consumers to engage in negative eWOM towards brand activism on social media.. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119308)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



Whirlwind warnings: Factors driving consumers to engage in negative eWOM towards brand activism on social media.

Abstract

A growing number of brands engage in brand activism by adopting positions on socio-political matters – and receive a wide array of consumer responses, especially on social media. Negative consumer responses pose a significant risk for brands, as negative emotions can quickly spread and potentially cause substantial damage. However, there is still a lack of complete comprehension about the underlying drivers motivating consumers to engage in eWOM following a brand activism initiative. This study employs a qualitative content analysis of 2,627 YouTube comments related to three large-scale brand activism campaigns to analyse key drivers of negative eWOM intentions. The findings reveal that consumers' opposing of brand activism is influenced by three key dimensions: consumer-related factors, company-related factors, and channel-related factors. The research offers a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving eWOM intentions when brands take a stance on socio-political issues.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Consumer Behaviour*

Track: Product and Brand Management