

The Helpful Review Paradox: How Review Helpfulness Discourages Word of Mouth Volume

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Abstract

This study explores the possible negative influence of helpful reviews on electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) volume. We posited that the existence of a helpful initial review may discourage people to write a subsequent review. In this research, we tested hypotheses related to the potential negative effect of helpful initial reviews, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics of online consumer behavior in the realm of eWOM. Based on the analytical model, we conducted multiple studies to examine how the perceived helpfulness of existing reviews can influence readers' likelihood of subsequent review writing. Interestingly, our findings offer a contrast to previous research that emphasized the positive influence of review helpfulness on review volume. Furthermore, we uncover how the review variance weaken the negative effects. Consequently, our findings have significant implications for online merchants, providers of e-commerce platforms, and consumers.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Recommendation Systems*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media