

Two-sided Analysis of Trust in Mobile Providers in Germany Using a Mixed Methods Approach

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Abstract

Enhancing consumer trust is pivotal for customer retention and preventing churn, especially in highly competitive markets with similar products between providers. However, measuring and interpreting consumer trust poses challenges, as factors like contractual obligations or high switching costs may be misinterpreted. This study examines consumer trust in mobile providers in the German market. First, we conducted 13 qualitative interviews with industry experts to formulate hypotheses that we tested by a subsequent quantitative online survey with consumers in Germany (N = 502). Contrary to the critical expert assumptions, the results revealed that consumer trust exceeded expectations. We found no correlation between the duration of customer relationships and the level of trust. The results are particularly interesting to mobile providers, but managers from other industries can also learn about strategies for strengthening consumer trust and managing customer relationships.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction*

Track: Relationship Marketing