

The Art of Responding to Customer Online Messages: The Role of Response Standardization

Sepehr Safari

Università Bocconi - Phd School

Gaia Rubera

Bocconi University

Cite as:

Safari Sepehr, Rubera Gaia (2025), The Art of Responding to Customer Online Messages: The Role of Response Standardization. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (124709)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



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Abstract

Social media has become a prevalent venue for customer service, transforming the dynamics of customer-brand interactions. This study investigates the impact of standardized responses (i.e., template responses) on customer feedback within these online engagements, a practice favored for its efficiency and consistency. Through an analysis of over 1 million messages between 167 American brands and their customers on X platform, our findings indicate that while standardized responses typically diminish feedback sentiment, they are particularly effective in addressing complaints from highly dissatisfied customers. Additionally, the uniqueness of customer messages intensifies the negative effects of response standardization. This study underscores the necessity for strategic decisions regarding response strategies, especially with the increasing ease of text generation. These insights offer invaluable guidance for brands striving to manage their social media engagements.

Track: Methods, Modelling & Marketing Analytics