

Overcoming Awkward Moments: The Role of Robot Interaction Modality in Shaping Service Robot Acceptance

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Abstract

This study examines how robot interaction modality affects robot acceptance during embarrassing service encounters. We propose that users interacting with text-enabled robots will show greater acceptance than those using voice-enabled robots in high-embarrassment situations. We also hypothesize that perceived control moderates this relationship. Study 1 demonstrates that consumers are more likely to accept text-enabled robots when experiencing higher embarrassment. Study 2 reveals that perceived control mediates the interaction between embarrassment and robot modality in a retail context. These results enhance theoretical understanding of embarrassment and robot design and offer practical implications for healthcare and retail sectors by highlighting the need to improve users' perceived control during robot interactions. Future studies will test factors such as voice gender to enhance consumer acceptance of service robots.

Keywords: conversational agents, embarrassment, modality

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