

Optimizing the “Aesthetics” of Online Product Ratings

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Cite as:

Ge Lin, Jia He (Michael), Kim B. Kyu (2025), Optimizing the “Aesthetics” of Online Product Ratings. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (126504)

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



Optimizing the “Aesthetics” of Online Product Ratings

Abstract:

When designing the visual aesthetic layout of product rating distributions, retail websites use horizontal bars to indicate the percentage of submissions for each possible rating. In business practice, the bars representing higher ratings (e.g., 5-star rating) are placed higher than the bars representing lower ratings (e.g., 1-star rating). We argue that the current practice for visually presenting product rating distributions might be sub-optimal because the default horizontal-bar layout usually looks unstable and in turn jeopardizes consumers’ perception of the product’s functional performance and decreases their purchase intention. Moreover, we create an easy-to-implement remedy to optimize the visual layout of product rating distributions—to switch from the horizontal-bar layout to the vertical-bar layout to improve perceived structure stability, perceived functional performance, and purchase intention.

Keywords: Review Ratings, Aesthetics, Visual Marketing

Track: Consumer Behaviour