

‘Say My Name’: How Naming Robots Improves Service Recovery Outcomes

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Abstract

As humanoid service robots (HSRs) become increasingly prevalent in hospitality services, understanding their effectiveness in recovering from service failures is critical. This research investigates whether naming a robot—a simple anthropomorphic cue—can enhance recovery outcomes. Drawing on theories of attribution and anthropomorphism, two experiments demonstrate that naming an HSR improves repurchase intent, particularly when the robot has low control over the service failure. The effect is mediated by perceived warmth towards the HSR. These findings offer a cost-effective, scalable strategy for service firms to mitigate negative responses to robot-driven service failures and contribute to the literature on service recovery and human–robot interaction.

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