

The Role of Brand Voice Divergence and Timing in Joining Another Brand's Social Media Conversation: A Real-Time Marketing Perspective

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Abstract

Real-time marketing (RTM) on social media allows brands to participate in trending events or moments in spontaneous and linguistically clever ways. Relying on creativity and improvisation, brands interact not only with consumers but also with other firms to capture attention and break through communication clutter. Focusing on brand-to-brand communications using Twitter (X) data, we investigate how language style and content timing influence engagement when joining another brand's conversation. Results reveal that social media posts that deviate from the brand's usual linguistic style (i.e., brand voice divergence) increases number of replies and quotes. In addition, entering social media discussions earlier enhances engagement. These findings point to the need for developing and nurturing social media capabilities that leverage creativity, improvisation, and swift responsiveness.

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