

Drivers and outcomes of chatbot use in business-to-business setting: An exploratory study

Sara Maga

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Faculty of Economics and Tourism "Dr. Mijo Mirkovi"

Mateja Bodlaj

University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business

Cite as:

Maga Sara, Bodlaj Mateja (2022), Drivers and outcomes of chatbot use in business-to-business setting: An exploratory study. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (111769)

Paper from the EMAC Regional 2022 Conference, Kaunas, Lithuania, September 21-23, 2022



Drivers and outcomes of chatbot use in business-to-business setting: An exploratory study

Abstract

Although chatbots are growing in popularity in the B2C literature, understanding of the B2B perspective remains limited. B2B buying behaviour varies as business customers appreciate different factors while evaluating company offerings. Therefore, this study aims to explore what motivates business customers to use chatbots and whether and how this usage can affect professional relationships. A qualitative study is conducted in the form of in-depth interviews with B2B managers and executives possessing real-life experience with chatbots for business purposes. The findings suggest that productivity as a result of time-saving matters, as do the convenience and self-service of chatbots, which simplify their work and enable them to avoid human representatives. The study shows the importance of personality type in explaining chatbot usage and indicates that chatbots can help build professional relationships.

Keywords: *conversational marketing; chatbots; B2B marketing*