

The Existence, Impact and Response of Unfair Online Comments

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Abstract

Network comments have an important reference role when people make online purchases. At present, many scholars have carried out research on online comments, including the purchase intention of consumers and the impact on enterprises. But few people consider whether online comments are fair, which ignores the existence of unfair online comments. This paper expounds the existence, definition, influence and coping strategy of fair network comments, hoping to expand the research of online comments.

Keywords

Network Comments; Fair; Influence and Coping Strategy.

1. Introduction

With the development of Internet technology and the universality and convenience of logistics development, more and more people choose online shopping to meet their daily needs. Especially at the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the country failed to fight the epidemic and reduce shopping through online shopping to meet the living needs of families and individuals. When consumers make online purchases, due to the lack of access to physical objects, coupled with the asymmetry of consumers' access to information, they will not only carefully study the commodity information, but also refer to the online comments about the product or service. Compared with the comments generated by enterprises, consumers are more confident of those online comments from other purchased consumers, so online comments have become an important basis for consumers' purchase decisions. [1]

Positive online reviews make potential consumers a positive attitude towards the business or product, increasing purchase intentions. Negative online comments will allow potential consumers to have a negative attitude towards the enterprise or products, induce distrust of the enterprise, and is not conducive to the purchase intention [2]. Both positive and negative online comments can have a big impact on consumer buying decisions. Among them, negative online comments have a greater impact on consumers than positive online reviews [3]. In real life, seeing an average of seven positive reviews may create buying intentions, while just seeing a negative review is likely to dispel the idea of buying. When consumers browse the online comments and think about their reference value to their own purchases, have they ever thought about whether these comments are objective and fair? In fact, consumers spend more attention on positive and negative comments, thinking about whether they are useful to themselves, often ignore whether the comments themselves are objective and fair. In other words, do these online comments have a reference significance? Most past scholars have also studied positive and negative online comments and their impact mechanisms, and few studies whether fair and unfair online comments will have on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions.

Thomas Arad et al. (2020) have confirmed that unfair online reviews are widespread [4]. Unfair network comment, its starting point is not in line with fairness, its reference significance is greatly reduced, and will also mislead consumers' purchase decisions. This article next

discusses the definition of unfair network comments, the distinction from false comments, the generation mechanism, influence, and response strategies.

2. Definition of Unfair Web Comments

Since few people currently study unfair network reviews, the relevant literature is scarce, and there is no independent definition of unfair network reviews. The academic literature mostly studies online reviews, and the unfair network review can be comprehensively defined from two parts: unfair and network review.

Equity is a sociological noun, and in law, fairness is one of the basic values that the law pursues. Public is fair, reasonable and has broad support; flat is the average of the attributes (including input, acquisition, etc.) of all participants (individuals or groups). Equity is impartiality. Unfair, it is contrary to the principle of fairness.

Online comment belongs to a kind of online reputation and refers to the positive or negative views related to products published by consumers on e-commerce platforms or other comment websites, which can realize shopping experience communication between users and users and interactive feedback between users and merchants. The development of information technology has greatly enriched the way that individuals can obtain information. Through the Internet, people can publish and view the evaluation and discussion of a certain product anytime and anywhere, thus giving birth to the network reputation. Network word of mouth is generally in the form of text for the product experience and evaluation to freely spread among different individuals (Herr, Kardes & Kim,1991), it is the informal, non-commercial communication between consumers.

After the above discussion above, unfair web reviews can be defined as unobjective, unbiased views or comments about the product posted on e-commerce platforms or other review sites. The difference between unfair comments and false comments will next be introduced.

3. The Difference between Unfair Comments and False Comments

What is a false comment? False comments, or untrue reviews, include good reviews made by merchants for improving sales, and malicious bad reviews created to combat competitors. Unfair comments and false comments can be distinguished from the following aspects:

First, different body. False comments are high praise generated by merchants through improper means such as brushing, praise and cash back or malicious bad comments made to combat competitors; unfair comments are online comments independently initiated by consumers who have purchased.

Second, the purpose is different. False comments are generated by businesses or merchants to improve product sales; unfair comments are generated to express the feelings of purchased consumers.

Finally, cost expenditure. Businesses or merchants pay certain amounts to drive reviewers to make false comments; unfair comments are comments independently issued by the purchased consumer at no cost.

4. Reasons for Unfair Online Comments

Due to the characteristics of freedom and unregulatory release of online comments, the occurrence of unfair network comments will be generated. There are several factors for unfair network comments:

First, wrong for used. Sometimes, the reason why consumers have a bad consumption experience is not the product itself, but the wrong way consumers use it. For example, a

foundation liquid needs to be patted open, and the buyer habitually pushes it open on the face. This wrong use method causes the foundation to not fit the skin, which eventually leads to consumers' bad consumption experience and release bad comments.

Second, emotional implications for the use of the product for effectiveness. Strong emotions affect the perception of things, that is, emotional states directly affect consumer perception of whether the product is useful and the degree of use. When consumers are in a positive state of use such as happiness and pleasure, the use of the product will have a good experience of the product, even if the product is defective will tolerate its imperfections and release positive online comments. When consumers are in negative emotions such as anger, depression, and are dominated by strong negative emotions, consumers cannot not perceive the effectiveness of the product normally, resulting to a negative product use experience, and then issuing negative online comments.

Finally, fan Economy. The fan economy is very strong. Brand owners usually consider the influence of stars when looking for product spokesmen. The star's influence is directly linked to the number of fan base he has. Stars with a certain fan base, the products he likes or represents will also be sought after by his fans. Their favorite stars endorse the product, the fans will actively buy the product. the star's advertising effect is also coming from the fans' support. Because like the star itself, jointly support his products, although the use experience may not be very good, but because they very like the spokesman, will also release comments beyond the product real effect, exaggerated utility, the purpose is to let the enterprise recognize love star ability to take goods, influence ability, expand the commercial value of the favorite star.

5. Unfair Comment on the Impact of Consumers

Due to information asymmetry, consumers rely on existing online reviews prior to online purchases. So, the impact of consumers posting unfair online reviews on future consumers is great. The first thing is to mislead consumers and make the wrong purchase decisions. Consumers see unfair positive online comments, because the reviewer has a good impression of the merchant or product by exaggerating the factual praise, and trust the comment to make the purchase decision, and the real product experience will let consumers have a sense of gap. In addition, due to unfair negative online comments, consumers have a feeling of distrust of the product, thus hindering the opportunity of consumers to buy, and may cause consumers to miss a suitable product.

6. The Impact of Unfair Comments on Businesses

On the one hand, unfair comments reduce the reputation and brand image of enterprises or businesses, and eventually lead to lower sales. For those unfair negative network comments, due to the personal bias or their own problems of consumers, they attribute the problem to the product, which leads the potential consumers to distrust the enterprise or merchants after browsing the comments, which leads to other consumers to be misled and hinder their purchase, thus reducing the sales of the product.

On the other hand, the impact of unfair comments on enterprises is not all negative. For those businesses with low profile, publicity will increase significantly after suffering unfair negative comments. The study by Thomas Arard et al. (2020) proved that when consumers identify unfair negative online comments, the perception and empathy effects of injustice will drive consumers to compensate for this unfairness by supporting merchants such as buying the product. Therefore, unfair negative online reviews can promote sales of goods.

7. How to Deal with Unfair Web Reviews

The adverse impact of unfair online reviews on consumers during online shopping is imperceptible. So how do consumers avoid being misled by unfair online comments when shopping online? For consumers, the first is to browse more and view relevant comments, to judge from the general trend of many comments or bad comments, and not to be induced by individual comments; the second is to enhance the ability to distinguish the objectivity in unfair comments.

For enterprises or businesses, in the face of unfair negative network comments, we should first reply to unfair online comments, explain their unfairness, let consumers understand the facts, and avoid consumers from being misled by the comments.

Secondly, the language of the reply should be vivid and simple, in explaining the problem is clear and does not appear aggressive, establish a gentle and polite good image, close the psychological distance with consumers, so that potential consumers to the enterprise enhanced, thus conducive to consumers to produce buying behavior.

8. Summary

All kinds of goods dazzle us when we buy through the web. Viewing online reviews under merchandise helps us learn more merchandise information and helps us make purchase decisions. It should be noted that when browsing the online comments, do not only see whether it is favorable or bad reviews from the surface, but also judge the reference value of the comments from the objectivity and rationality of the comments content. Only by correctly identifying online comments can we avoid being misled, help us make the right purch.

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