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Complaint handling on social media: the impact of multiple response times on consumer satisfaction

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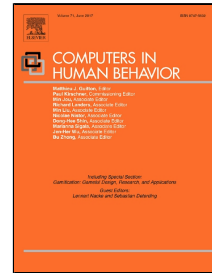
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Title Page

Title: Complaint handling on social media: the impact of multiple response times on consumer satisfaction

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Abstract

With the increasing popularity of social media, understanding online consumer behaviors is becoming increasingly important for researchers in this field and practitioners who manage social media accounts. The focus of this study is one of the critical aspects of online complaint handling: response time. Using data collected from consumers who complained on Facebook or Twitter, the study explores how the response times of multiple company responses on social media influence consumer satisfaction. Specifically, the first response after the complaint and the conclusive response that closed the complaint file were investigated in regard to consumers' objectives for complaining. Participants in the study stated that they expected companies to reply to their complaints within 1-3 hours on Twitter and within 3-6 hours on Facebook. The analysis reveals that both a quicker first response and a quicker conclusive response lead to higher satisfaction with complaint handling. Furthermore, in contrast to previous research on response time in offline redress-seeking situations, which has suggested that when consumers receive redress, response time does not have an effect on satisfaction, the findings of this study suggest that a speedy response increases satisfaction regardless of the consumers' objectives. These findings provide implications for researchers and practitioners.

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