INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF SELF-PRESENTATION AT SOCIAL NETWORK SITES ON PURCHASE BEHAVIOR: A TEXT MINING AND ECONOMETRIC APPROACH

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Abstract

With advances in information and communication technologies (ICT), companies and platforms look to use the increasing volume and diversity of user-generated content (UGC) to predict consumer behavior, but with mixed results. In this study, we propose a text mining technique to find support for self-presentation in online social media and show that this is correlated with the content producer’s offline purchase behaviour. We use unique datasets from a social network site (SNS) and an offline fashion retailer to find that: i) while public and private volume and sentiment metrics leads to non-significant predictions, the divergence between the sentiment of public and private content can significantly explain offline purchases, ii) users who engage in SNS for self-presentation spend less money and buy less quantities of fashion apparels, and iii) however, they spend more when exposed to specific site features that inspire self-presentation, like brand pages. Marketers and platform owners can benefit from our insights by designing appropriate features to target such users. The study also furthers our understanding of how brand pages on social media might interest certain types of customers and benefit brand owners.

Keywords: User-generated content, Information divergence, Self-presentation, Consumer behavior, Text mining.

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