

THE ROLE OF RATIONAL AND EMOTIONAL EVALUATIONS IN PREDICTING E-WOM BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Word of mouth (WOM) has an important role in marketing, because initiating positive WOM among customers is now a vital part of most companies' marketing strategies. Its role has evolved and it became more widespread with the introduction of the Internet technologies. This new form of WOM communication, which is called electronic WOM (eWOM) facilitates customers to share their experiences and advices more easily. Understanding the factors that influence the eWOM behaviors of consumers may help companies in determining their communication objectives. This study tries to investigate the drivers of eWOM behavior and handles "website service quality" and "website reputation" as rational factors that are driven by company and "brand love" and "consumer-brand identification" as emotional factors that are driven by consumers' feelings towards the company.

In order to test the effects of rational and emotional factors on positive eWOM, 400 questionnaires were applied to the customers of a well-known Turkish e-tailer. Except website reputation, all of the constructs found to have positive effects on eWOM behavior. Contrary to the original hypothesis, website reputation was not found to have a significant effect on eWOM behaviors of online consumers.

Keywords: eWOM, website service quality, website reputation, brand love, consumer-brand identification

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