



Article Title

Good discounts earn good reviews in return? Effects of price promotion on online restaurant reviews.

Citation

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Abstract

Online consumer reviews (OCRs) are valuable to consumers and sellers. Online price promotion is commonly used by local merchants to increase sales. However, knowledge of the differences in OCRs between consumers who received a discount and regular consumers is limited. This study investigates the effects of price discounts on restaurant OCRs by comparing the review rating and open-ended contents of OCRs from consumers who received a discount and regular consumers. The results show that the review rating is higher from consumers who received a discount, whereas the word count, image count, and diversity of review contents are higher from regular consumers. Regular consumers are more likely to mention product quality, environmental quality, service quality, geographic location, purchasing process, recommendation expression, and loyalty expression in OCRs, and there is no significant difference in the dimensions of price, cognitive attitude, and emotional attitude between the two groups.

Conclusion

In the present study, consumers who received a discount provide a higher review rating in OCRs than regular consumers do. Furthermore, regular consumers post more textual contents and images in OCRs than consumers who received a discount do. This finding agrees with previous findings that financial incentives have negative effect on altruistic behavior.

Price promotion as a financial incentive can reduce the altruistic behavior of consumers in posting detailed online reviews. Price promotion must be used cautiously by restaurants because detailed OCRs achieve a high diagnostic value. Regular consumers are more likely to mention product quality, environmental quality, service quality, geographic location, purchasing process, recommendation expression, and loyalty expression in OCRs than consumers who received a discount do, and they mention price, cognitive attitude, and emotional attitude as consumers who received a discount do.

The study confirms that this effect also exists when posting OCRs. In the context of posting OCRs, reviewers express their own attitudes more quickly and easily than recalling product-, seller-, and other self-related information, such as purchasing process, whether to recommend, and whether to be loyal. This mechanism may explain why consumers who received a discount mention cognitive attitude and emotional attitude similar to regular consumers in OCRs. In addition, consumers who received a discount easily consider the price, although the price is a product-related dimension. This phenomenon may be the reason why they mention price as regular consumers do.

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