

The effect of augmented reality on consumers' reactions to mobile marketing

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ABSTRACT

Smartphones have become part of our daily life and it is hard to imagine not to take them anywhere with us. Also, day by day there are new features or new mobile applications that consumers can try and benefit from various useful features. As besides the constant growth in the number of smartphone users also new technologies are developed, businesses and especially marketing managers should pay attention to the most recent trends. Thus, the main focus should be on creating marketing content for mobile devices, in order to be able to interact and engage with consumers anywhere, any time. Marketers should also put a high emphasis on augmented reality, that is an emerging technology offering plentiful opportunities as a mobile marketing tool.

Recent research has already dealt with the topic of augmented reality in the context of marketing, however because of the innovative nature of AR there is a research gap in specific aspects, such as there is no framework for designing AR campaigns or guidelines on the implementation of AR into a firm's strategy or no research focusing on consumers' reaction specifically to mobile marketing content with AR. Therefore, the study aims to reveal consumers' response to mobile AR marketing content as well as to investigate the effect of AR on predefined aspects, such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, interactivity and anticipated emotions.

For this purpose, an experimental research design was applied, whereby an online experiment was conducted within a sample representative of the Austrian population. To both groups of the online experiment a video was presented about one of IKEA's mobile application. The experimental group was exposed by a stimulus, namely by the AR feature of IKEA Place, while for the control group the traditional app of IKEA was displayed.

The findings of the online experiment indicate that AR has a positive influence on most of the measured constructs, except perceived ease of use, as in this case no significant results were found. These constructs contribute to the increase of attitude towards use and consequently, behavioural intention is positively influenced by attitude towards use. The study also reveals that AR apps are perceived by consumers to be more useful, more interactive as well as they anticipate more positive emotions from using an AR app. Overall, it can be concluded, that AR provides various valuable opportunities for marketing purposes, thus businesses should aim to implement this technology and make use of it in order to create extraordinary experience and increase customer engagement.
