

ASSESSMENT OF ONLINE PRODUCT INFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

Online product information (OPI) has become an important reference source for many consumers, whether they eventually buy online or in the traditional marketplace. Therefore, it is in the interest of manufacturers and retailers to understand the various ways OPI can influence consumers. Based on the stimulus-organism-response model, this study examined the relationship between mental evaluations of OPI and its actual adoption. The mental evaluations studied included cognitive and affective evaluations, and the OPI examined included online product reviews and vendor-supplied product information (VSPI). Data were collected from participants' perceptions of reading OPI. Analysis of the results showed that both cognitive and affective evaluations influenced the adoption of VSPI, but only cognitive evaluations affected the adoption of online reviews. In addition to these dynamics, the adoption of VSPI affected the adoption of online reviews. Finally, theoretical and practical implications of the findings are also discussed.