

Motivations and Impression Management:
Predictors of Social Networking Site Use and User Behavior

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Abstract

This paper applied the uses and gratifications theory to the social networking site, Facebook, in an effort to examine the predictive power of consumers' motivations with regards to site use and behaviors towards advertisements on the site. Consumers' online impression management behaviors are discussed in detail, and are considered a possible motivation for site use. An online survey measured study participants' (N=288) intensity of Facebook use, their motivations for using the site, and their behavioral intentions toward approaching and avoiding advertisements on the site.

A total of nine consumer motivations for using Facebook were extracted from a principal components factor analysis and were labeled information, entertainment, discussion, connect, shop, game, update, product inquiry, and impression management. The Facebook use variable was regressed on the nine motivation variables in a multiple regression analysis, which revealed that the motivations labeled connect and entertainment were predictors of Facebook use. Both the approach and avoidance behavioral intention variables were also regressed on the nine motivation variables. The motivations labeled shop and product inquiry were both positive predictors of approach behavior, and both negative predictors of avoidance behaviors towards advertisements on Facebook. The motivation labeled impression management was not a significant predictor of Facebook use or behavior intentions towards advertisements on the site as literature suggested. Additional research on consumer impression management behavior on social networking sites is suggested. Implications of study findings for online advertisers and Web site managers are discussed.