

How Message Framing and Temporal Distance Affect Word of Mouth

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Abstract : In the crowdfunding model, a campaign succeeds by collecting the funds required over a predefined duration. The success of a CF campaign depends both on the capacity to attract members of the online communities concerned, and on the community members' involvement in online word-of-mouth recommendations. To maximize the campaign's success probability, project creators (i.e., an organization appealing for financial resources) send messages to contributors to ask them to issue word of mouth. Internet users relay information about projects through Word of Mouth which is defined as "a critical tool for facilitating information diffusion throughout online communities". The effectiveness of these messages depends on the message framing and the time at which they are sent to contributors (i.e., at the start of the campaign or close to the deadline). This article addresses the following question: What are the effect of message framing and temporal distance on the willingness to share word of mouth? Drawing on Perspectives Theory and Construal Level Theory, this study examines the interplay between message framing (Gains vs. Losses) and temporal distance (message while the deadline is coming vs. far) on intention to share word of mouth. A between-subject experimental design is conducted to test the research model. Results show significant differences between a loss-framed message (lack of benefits if the campaign fails) associated with a short deadline (ending tomorrow) compared to a gain-framed message (benefits if the campaign succeeds) associated with a distant deadline (ending in three months). However, this effect is moderated by the anticipated regret of a campaign failure and the temporal orientation. These moderating effects contribute to specifying the boundary condition of the framing effect. Handling the message framing and the temporal distance are thus the key decisions to influence the willingness to share word of mouth.

Keywords : construal levels, crowdfunding, message framing, word of mouth

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