

Customer Engagement with Augmented Reality Mobile Apps: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Augmented reality (AR) has emerged as a new technology available to retailers to engage with customers in a novel and vivid way (Yim et al, 2017). While AR is in its infancy in terms of its application in consumer markets, spending on the technology is expected to reach \$60 billion by 2020 (Porter and Heppelmann, 2017). Augmented reality aims to link the real world with the virtual world (Rauschnabel et al, 2015). Azuma (1997) asserts that augmented reality integrates computer generated objects with the real world and provides individuals with real-time interactions. For a long time, AR has been hindered by large and cumbersome devices (Rese et al, 2017). However, with the adoption of the ubiquitous smartphone, developers, retailers and consumers' interest in augmented reality has significantly grown, as such many retailers are now implementing augmented reality features into their mobile applications (Dacko, 2017).

Pantano (2014) highlights the potential of augmented reality in engaging customers and influencing their purchase intentions. AR's ability to overlay the physical environment with virtual elements including information and images, which can interact with the physical environment during real-time, offers firms new possibilities in delivering content to consumers. In turn, the functions available through augmented reality has the potential to change a number of consumer activities including product trials, virtual try on and information search and acquisition (Javornik, 2016).

Drawing upon Javornik's (2016) augmented reality research agenda, as well as Rese et al (2017), Kim and Hyun (2016) and Yim et al (2017) research on the adoption of AR mobile apps, the aim of this research is twofold. Firstly, to explore the variables that influence customer engagement with augmented reality features on mobile applications and secondly, to assess the influence of such augmented reality brand engagement on satisfaction with the customer experience and brand usage intent.

In the form of an online questionnaire, data were gathered from 474 consumers who had used the augmented reality features on the IKEA Place app, which is downloadable from the Play Store on the android platform and the App Store on the IOS platform. Respondents had downloaded and retained the app for at least one month and used the augmented reality feature more than once. A model of hypothesised relationships was examined with the use of structural equation modelling to identify the influence of AR and Technology attributes on consumer brand engagement and subsequent outcomes of satisfaction with the experience and brand usage intention.

Keywords: Augmented Reality, Mobile-Apps, Brand Engagement, Customer Experience

References Available Upon Request