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An examination of the persuasive marketing strategies used by charity websites to attract donors

How prevalent are charity websites on applying persuasive marketing strategies towards an increase in donor intentions?

Asha Kheta & Dr Moira Cachia



Introduction

- Donation is a form of pro-social behaviour performed for a healthier functioning of a society (Chang, 2014).
- Commercial marketing such as websites have become an increasingly popular method of donation appeal by charity organisations.
- Message variables, Message framing, Guilt, Altruistic and Egoistic Motives are seen most common in charity websites.
- Azjen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour proposes that people's behaviours are determined by their intentions through the process of 3 component: Attitude towards behaviour, Subjective Norms & Perceived Behavioural Control.

Aim of Study

- Examine possible persuasive marketing strategies used by charity websites to attract donors' attention
- Through Thematic Analysis, interpret website data to observe most common methods used to increase donation intentions.

Methods

- Qualitative research method was used as it provides in depth interpretations.
- Use of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) provided flexibility and opportunity to focus on analysing the data in richer detail through the use of relevant themes and subthemes.
- 12 charity websites were used in order to observe possible persuasive marketing strategies initiating attitude change in donor intentions.
- Ethical approval was granted by the Psychology Research Ethics Committee of UWL.

Analysis



Discussion

- Guilt appeals were seen to be the most prevalent and favourable form of persuasive advertising tool used amongst majority of the websites.
- Emerged themes mirrored previous research indicating that charity websites use various forms of message variables and guilt stimuli to increase donation intention.

Limitations

- Interpretations may be subject to researcher bias.
- This study does not allow for comparison of marketing strategies across different causes.

Implications

- Findings in this research provide supportive attributes for smaller charities intending to gain donations & anticipating to establish a profitable charity organisation.
- The findings in this study proposed that any form of marketing and advertising requires persuasive message channels; encourage & enabling funding from potential consumers increasing higher profit margins.

Future Recommendations

- Use of content analysis – allows direct observation of specific images and word concepts within various media e.g. Books, TV, Billboards and Ad's.
- Focus on a larger scale of data in order to analyse more profound methods of attracting donor intention.

References

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