

Machine Talk: How Conversational Interfaces Alter Consumer Choice And Drive Conversion

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This research examines the effects of conversational bot interfaces on consumers' brand perceptions and the effectiveness of persuasion attempts. We build on recent work on assemblage theory and provide a conceptualization of intelligent bot interfaces as agentic object-extensions for brands that incorporate properties of agency, autonomy, and authority. We provide evidence from four experiments that incorporating such intelligent bot interfaces into the shopping process promotes more intimate consumer-brand relationships and increases consumers' inclination to accept more higher-priced premium offers compared to traditional interfaces. We further show that these effects are consistent across consumer demographics but that a low need for human service interaction renders the effect of conversational interfaces ineffective.