

New marketing study: voice or touch user interaction, you have to choose

According to a new study conducted by emlyon business school, in the adoption phase of voice technologies, consumers are less confident in companies that simultaneously offer multisensory interactions (voice and touch). Touch interaction produces more brand confidence and commitment.

An unpublished study. This work is led by [Margherita Pagani](#), director of the research centre "[Artificial Intelligence in Value Creation](#)" and professor of digital marketing at emlyon **business school**, in collaboration with colleagues from ESSCA School of Management and Florida State University, College of Business. They aim to analyse the impact and differences between purely touch-based interaction and "touch and voice" interaction in terms of consumer engagement and brand confidence.

Published in the *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, this study is the first of its kind to explore the effects of new voice interface modes on marketing relationships. While technology multiplies the possible ways in which consumers interact with brands, it shows that excess interaction can have a negative impact on the shopping experience. It offers suggestions to managers on how to improve personal commitment and trust in the brand.

Methodology. The researchers designed two separate experiments, one focused on a utilitarian product and the other on a "hedonic" product. Both experiments involved more than 90 participants from Generation Y, a generation commonly equipped with the latest smartphones and often using them for commercial interactions. In both cases, participants had to interact with the brand through their smartphones, including calling the company to ask a specific set of questions. The first group was instructed to interact with the brand using exclusively tactile interaction. The second used both tactile and vocal interaction - either with Apple's Siri voice assistant or with Google OK. Participants were then asked to rate their experience as clients. Participants' responses were measured to assess their personal commitment to the tasks at hand, their level of trust in the brand and their privacy concerns.

The researchers observed that participants who used only tactile interaction felt a much higher level of personal engagement with the brand than those who used tactile and vocal interaction.

According to Margherita Pagani: "Many companies have launched new artificial intelligence products based on voice activation, such as Amazon's Alexa, Google Home's home assistant or Apple's Siri. With these products, they hope to increase customer experiential engagement, stimulate interaction and collect more data to better personalize the experience through automatic learning. However, our study shows that in fact, in the initial adoption phase, the addition of speech recognition has the opposite effect to that expected. Although voice can be considered as a way of developing a much more natural mode of interaction, the level of cognitive effort required by the brain to use two simultaneous sensory modes (vocal and tactile) is higher. As a result, it is more difficult for consumers to really get involved and fully invest in the product. »



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The researchers also found that participants who used only touch-based interaction felt they had more control over the information they shared, resulting in greater trust in the brand. Users indicated that it seemed much easier to provide information through a single sensory mode. For Margherita Pagani: "If consumers have less confidence in brands that use both voice and touch, it is probably because of a lack of familiarity with how these digital voice interactions work. In addition, unlike voice, touch mode offers much more control to the consumer. »

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