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2021-2022 Wednesday Lunch Seminar Series

How Linguistic Framing Influences Responses to Crowdfunding Appeals

30 MAR 2022 | 12:30pm- 2:00pm (Online Mode)



Zoom Meeting ID: 976 4495 22746

Speaker: Dr. Lei SU

This research uses a crowdfunding context to examine when and why a simple difference in frame—using “want” versus “need” in the request—affects funders’ compliance with an appeal for contributions. Building on the semantic framing and psycholinguistics literature, we propose that using “want” versus “need” signals that the fundraiser is a less versus more dependent person. This perception difference then exerts opposing effects for the two major forms of crowdfunding appeals. For reward-based appeals, in which the fundraisers promise a return on contribution, funders have an incentive-seeking goal and are more willing to contribute to a less dependent fundraiser. In contrast, for donation-based appeals, in which no incentives are promised by the fundraisers, funders are primarily motivated by a helping goal, and are more willing to contribute to a fundraiser who is perceived to be a more dependent person. Therefore, we predict that a “want” (“need”) frame is more effective in reward-based (donation-based) crowdfunding. Results from large-scale field studies and lab experiments provide support for our predictions and also illuminate the underlying mechanisms.



Dr. Lei SU is an Associate Professor of Marketing in Hong Kong Baptist University. She holds a Ph.D. in marketing from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, a M.S. in physical chemistry from Tsinghua University, and a B.S. in chemistry from China Agricultural University. Her research interests include consumer judgement and decision making, digital communication, scheduling style, social and socioeconomic influence. Her research has appeared in various leading marketing journals, such as Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, and Journal of Consumer Psychology. Prior to entering academia, she worked as Research and Analytics Director in Starcom Mediavest Group, and Associate Brand Manager in Procter & Gamble. She also had experience working in consulting projects with companies such as IBM and Bank of China.



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