

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Customer Engagement with Healthcare Apps: The Contextual Role of the Covid Crisis

By

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Date : 26 Apr 2022 (TUE)

Time : 7 pm – 8 pm

Venue : Online via Zoom

Abstract

Many health care apps saw a surge in demand as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, but only a small proportion of health care apps attract repeat usage. There is currently no systematic framework that examines the characteristics that contribute to app performance in the purchase stage, as well as app engagement in the post-purchase stage. To shed light on drivers of health care app usage, we examine the role of four health care app characteristics (social interaction, security, design and premium features) and compare their impact between pre- and post-pandemic periods. Our research examines four outcome metrics reflective of prepurchase, purchase, and postpurchase stages: downloads, revenue, ratings, and subjective well-being. We test our model using weekly data on 493 health care apps over a four-year period from 2017 to 2020 in four countries (the United States, France, Germany, and Italy). The findings reveal that the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically increased the role of some app characteristics (social interaction and design) while it reduced the impact of other characteristics (security and premium). Security features had positive impacts on the pre-purchase stages, but their impact became negative in the post-purchase stage. We discuss implications of these findings for theory, practice, and policy.

Prof. Vanitha Swaminathan is Thomas Marshall Professor of Marketing at the University of Pittsburgh and the Director & Founder of the Katz Center for Branding, which aims to be a global thought-leader in digital branding and technology branding strategies. As Center Director of the Center for Branding, Prof. Swaminathan has been active in developing thought leadership, partnerships and programs involving various aspects of digital branding and technology branding strategy.

Swaminathan is the incoming Editor of *Journal of Marketing*, and will serve in that role from 2022-2025. Professor Swaminathan has published extensively in various leading marketing and management journals including *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Marketing Science*, and *Strategic Management Journal*. She has served as Area Editor of *Journal of Marketing*. She has won awards for her research including the Lehmann Best Paper Awards, *Journal of Advertising's* Best Paper Award. Professor Swaminathan is currently serving on a three-year term on the American Marketing Association Board of Directors and previously served in AMA's Academic Council as President. Professor Vanitha Swaminathan has also co-authored the Fifth Edition of the world-renowned textbook *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*, along with Professor Kevin Lane Keller.

Professor Swaminathan's research and commentaries on branding and digital marketing are quoted in various international media outlets such as *Forbes*, *The Miami Herald*, *Los Angeles Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, NPR, Sirius Radio, *Science Daily*, *Slate*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Economic Times* (India), *Frontline* (India), *BBC Brasil* (UK), and *Último*. She has worked with companies such as EA Sports, Smucker's, DowDuPont, Young & Rubicam, The Hershey Company, KraftHeinz, StarKist, AC Nielsen, GlaxoSmithKline, and P&G, on marketing and branding consulting projects. She has also extensively worked with small businesses on advising them regarding their digital marketing efforts.

All interested are welcome.



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