

Institute for Public Relations Top Three Paper of Practical Significance Award

**Cultivating Relationships through a Mobile Website: The Importance of
Modality Interactivity and Message Interactivity**

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Abstract

Corporate websites are being increasingly accessed via smart phones, and companies are scrambling to offer a mobile-friendly user experience on their sites. However, very little is known about how design factors such as interactivity in the mobile context affects user perceptions of companies. This study investigates the effects of two types of interactivity upon individuals' relational outcomes towards companies through a 2 (modality interactivity: high vs. low) x 3 (message interactivity: low vs. medium vs. high) between-participants factorial experiment. The results suggest that incorporating modality interactivity and message interactivity on a mobile website can enhance relational outcomes and behavioral intentions towards the company. However, modality and message interactivity need to be carefully designed in the mobile context as they may also evoke negative reactions among users who are less competent at using technology. In addition, the results of this study highlight the importance of several psychological variables (i.e., enjoyment, user engagement, contingency, and dialogue) as they come together to inform theoretical mechanisms underlying the effects of mobile website interactivity on outcome variables of interest to corporate public relations.

Acknowledgement

This research is supported by the U. S. National Science Foundation (NSF) via Standard Grant No. IIS-0916944.