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Exploring how consumers cope with online behavioral advertising

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Abstract

This study explores how consumers cope with a computer technology-driven persuasion tactic called online behavioral advertising (OBA). By tracking consumers' online behaviors, OBA delivers highly tailored advertising messages to individual consumers, giving rise to serious privacy concerns due to their covert nature. Integrating the persuasion knowledge model and the protection motivation theory, we employed a survey method (N = 442) to examine how consumers cope with OBA based on their persuasion knowledge, cognitive appraisal, and cognitive processing variables. The results reveal that persuasion knowledge was indirectly associated with coping behavior of ad avoidance throughout cognitive appraisal process (perceived risks; perceived benefits; self-efficacy). Privacy concerns partially mediated such associations with ad avoidance. Interestingly, cognitive processing variables (reactance; perceived

personalization) were significantly associated with ad avoidance without being related to persuasion knowledge. The implications for theoretical, managerial, and social contributions are discussed.

Keywords:

- online behavioral advertising
- online privacy concerns
- ad avoidance
- persuasion knowledge
- protection motivation

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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