How Transparency Cues Bring Trust in Conversation-Related Advertising. Examining the Roles of Surveillance Beliefs and Perceived Surveillance.

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Abstract

Previous research has shown that users believe that electronic devices listen to their offline conversations to promote personalized advertising. This belief can lead to negative outcomes, such as lower trust in companies' data-handling practices and a more negative ad attitude. In this study, we explore whether a transparency tool, the Why Am I Seeing This Ad (WAIST) feature on social media, can serve as an effective solution to mitigate the negative impacts of this belief surrounding conversation-related advertising. We conducted a 2 (transparency cues: absence vs. presence) between-subjects factorial experiment (N = 150). The results show that disclosure of the WAIST feature significantly enhances users' attitudes toward the ad compared to the non-disclosure condition. However, we don't see the mediating role of surveillance beliefs or perceived surveillance in this process. These results suggest that WAIST is a promising strategy for promoting more positive attitudes toward conversation-related advertisements. They also speak to the Dataveillance Effects in Advertising Landscape (DEAL) framework and the Transparency-Awareness-Control (TAC) framework, broadening existing understandings of how surveillance beliefs and perceived surveillance operate.

Keywords: Perceived surveillance, transparency, e-eavesdropping, trust, privacy, conversation-related advertising