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How Inaccessible Retailer Websites Affect Blind and Low-Vision Consumers: Their Perceptions and Responses

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Online Accessibility – The Problem

• A website is designed to be accessible or inaccessible
• There are specific flaws creating issues with navigation
  • These issues are categorized:
    • Type A – Very Difficult/Impossible
    • Type AA – Very Difficult/Difficult
    • Type AAA – Difficult/Less Important Areas
• Universal Design
Online Accessibility – Who Is Impacted?

• One out of five consumers has disability affecting major activities
• Half impacted by website accessibility – 30 Million
• Stems for inability to use a mouse or compatibility issues with screen-reading software program
Blind & Low Vision

• Propels most advocacy
• Files most lawsuits
• Large and growing population
Social Identity Theory

• Used to explain prejudice
• Focuses on in-group vs. out-group
• Establishes a discriminatory event
Disconfirmed Expectations

• Cognitive Dissonance
• Assimilation Contrast Theory
• Contrast Theory
Attribution Theory

• Used to assess blame after failure
• Kelly's Co-Variation
  • Distinctiveness
  • Consensus
  • Consistency
Consumer Normalcy

• Participation – I am here
• Competence and control – I am in control
• Distinction – I am me
• Equality – I am an equal
Welcome

• Physical marketplace
• Personnel
• Other patrons
• Product selection
• Disconfirmed when negative interaction occurs
Hypotheses

• H1: NWOM/Social Media Sharing
• H2: Avoidance of Other Sales Channels
• H3: Complaint Behaviors – Direct/3rd Party
• H4: Effect Mediated by Anger Toward the Retailer
• H5: Consequences Stronger in High Effort Conditions
• H6: Feelings of Discrimination Lead to Higher Levels of Consequences
Methodology

• Recruited 520 blind participants from NFB, AFB, ACB
• 380 completed responses within subject's design
• Scenario-based
Results

• H1: NWOM – supported
• H2: Avoidance – supported
• H3: Complaint Behaviors – not-supported/supported
• H4: Anger – supported
• H5: Effort – not supported
• H6: Discrimination – supported
Limitations & Future Research

• Ardent blind participants
• Other disabled populations
• Scenario-approach?
• Social media e-commerce investigations needed
• Other variables to be explored
Conclusion

• Digital inclusion is a widespread problem
• Affects a large and growing population
• Solutions are readily available
• Add accessibility to more curricula to increase awareness and attention