



IUL School of Social Sciences

Department of Social and Organizational Psychology

Let's put a smile...on that brand!
The effect of Emojis on Brand Perception and Brand Personality

Dissertation submitted as partial requirement for the conferral of

Master in Social and Organizational Psychology

by

Bernardo Miguel Pereira Cavalheiro

Supervisor:
Doctor Marília Prada, Invited Assistant Professor,
ISCTE-IUL, CIS-IUL

October, 2017

Agradecimentos

À Professora Marília Prada, por me ter aceite como seu orientando e me ter passado todo o conhecimento necessário para a realização deste projeto. Um especial agradecimento também pela célere resposta em momentos de indefinição e incerteza durante o atribulado ano letivo, nomeadamente no que a questões pessoais e profissionais diz respeito.

Um último agradecimento por ter exigido de mim mais do que eu achava possível e razoável, não me deixando acomodar com decisões que só a curto prazo me facilitariam a vida e percurso. Obrigado.

Aos meus pais, por toda a formação. Pelo carácter que ajudaram a moldar. Pelo desenvolvimento intelectual que sempre suscitaram. Por nunca terem esperado de mim o razoável, mas sim a excelência e a constante superação. Por me terem sustentado mais do que deviam. E por nunca o terem cobrado. Obrigado.

Ao meu irmão, por cedo me ter ensinado que o que é, não parece. Por me ter ensinado que muitas vezes, sou eu contra o mundo. E por cedo me ter ensinado que primeiro estou eu, e depois o resto.

À minha avó, pela educação e apoio no desenvolvimento, apesar da forma arcaica com que sempre o fez (e vai fazendo).

À Lúcia, por ter sido mais do que uma consultora informal. Por me ter suportado em momentos de desânimo e desencanto. Por todas as horas que perdeu. Por ter sido mais do que minha amiga. Por ter sido companheira e companhia. Por ter sido mais do que se esperava que fosse. Nunca o vou esquecer. Obrigado.

Ao Ricardo, pela compreensão e flexibilidade em momentos de aperto. E pelas dicas!

A todos os meus amigos, por me terem perguntado recorrentemente “quando é que acabas o mestrado!?”, empurrando-me no caminho certo e deixando implícita a sugestão “a ver se desta te redimes da licenciatura”.

E a todos os que participaram neste estudo, tornando assim possível a conclusão desde longo projeto. A todos os que aqui vierem parar, obrigado!

Resumo

Nos dias de hoje, a comunicação mediada por computador (CMC) é uma forma de comunicação adotada por grande parte das pessoas e pode variar entre contextos (comunicamos com parceiros românticos, amigos, colegas). Isto ocorre não só entre indivíduos, mas também entre indivíduos e marcas. Contudo, ao contrário da comunicação face-a-face (F2F), na CMC temos falta de pistas não verbais, dificultando a compreensão da mensagem e podendo redundar em ambiguidade. Uma forma de contornar esta limitação, é através da utilização de emoticons ou emojis, que permitem expressar emoções, e reforçar o tom de uma mensagem, sendo relevante perceber como é que a inclusão de emojis, em CMC, é percebida por potenciais consumidores de uma marca fictícia, relevante pela crescente presença das marcas em contextos digitais (i.e., redes sociais). Realizamos um estudo experimental para investigar como é que a inclusão de emojis (vs. Controlo) numa comunicação emitida por uma marca fictícia em crise (i.e., recolha de produto defeituoso) influencia a perceção global da marca e sua personalidade. Os participantes (N = 201, 62.4% sexo feminino) foram expostos a um cenário fictício que variava em termos da inclusão ou não de um emoji e do nível de gravidade do defeito. Os resultados sugerem que fazer a recolha de produtos defeituosos pode ser visto como socialmente responsável. Os emojis não exerceram influência direta na perceção de marca. A utilização de emojis não se adequa a todos os contextos. Estas evidências são de especial relevância para a área da psicologia do consumidor e da comunicação.

Palavras-chave: comunicação mediada por computador, emoji, personalidade de marca, perceção da marca, crise de produto.

Classificação APA:

2700 Communication Systems

2750 Mass Media Communications

3900 Consumer Psychology

3920 Consumer Attitudes & Behavior

Abstract

Nowadays, computer mediated communication (CMC) is part of most people's way of communicating, varying across contexts (e.g., we communicate with romantic partners, friends, or in professional settings). This occurs not only among individuals, but also between individuals and brands. However, in contrast to face-to-face (F2F) communication, CMC lacks non-verbal cues, making it harder to perceive a message. One way to overcome this limitation is the inclusion of emoticons and emojis, used to express emotion and to reinforce and clarify a message. Our goal is to understand how the inclusion of emojis in CMC is understood and apprehended by customers of a fictional brand, relevant due to the increasing presence of most brands in digital contexts (i.e., social media platforms). We conducted an experimental study to investigate how including emoji (vs. control) in a product recall message influences general brand perception and brand personality. Participants were presented with a fictional scenario of a fictional brand dealing with a product-harm crisis. Participants ($N = 201$, 62.4% females) were assigned to a fictional scenario that varied in terms of the presence or absence of an emoji and the level of perceived severity of the defect. Results suggest that making callbacks of defective products can be seen as socially responsible. No direct effects of emojis in brand perception were found. The usage of emojis is not appropriate in all contexts. These findings are of relevance especially for the field of consumer psychology and communication studies.

Key-words: computer mediated communication, emoji, brand personality, brand perception, product-harm crisis.

American Psychological Association (PsycINFO Classification Categories and Codes):

2700 Communication Systems

2750 Mass Media Communications

3900 Consumer Psychology

3920 Consumer Attitudes & Behavior

Contents

Introduction	1
Computer Mediated Communication	1
Brand Perception	5
Brand Personality	8
Aims and Hypotheses	11
CHAPTER I	
Method.....	13
Participants and Design	13
Instruments	13
Brand personality	13
Brand and company perception	13
Procedure	14
CHAPTER II	
Results	17
Manipulation check	17
Severity level	17
Emoji’s presence.....	18
Impact of Emoji Presence and Severity of the Defect on Brand and Company Perception.	18
Impact of Emoji Presence and Severity of the Defect on Brand personality	21
Additional Analysis	22
Attitudes towards emoji use in marketing communication.....	23
CHAPTER III	
Discussion.....	25
Conclusion.....	31
References	32
Appendix A – Study Survey	39
Appendix B – Brand Personality Scale	47
Appendix C - Effect of conditions on Brand Perception	48
Appendix D - Effect of conditions on Brand Personality	49
Appendix E – Factor Analysis.....	50

Index of Tables

Table 1. Mean Evaluations across Brand and Company Perception Dimensions (Overall, according to Severity and Emoji Conditions)	19
Table 2. Mean Evaluations across Brand Personality Subscales (Overall, according to Severity and Emoji Conditions).	22

Index of Figures

Figure 1. Scenarios according to experimental condition.	15
Figure 2. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji’s presence on the confidence of the opinion about Electra.	20
Figure 3. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji’s presence on the willingness to buy another Electra product.	21
Figure 4. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji’s presence on the level of worry regarding the defect.	23

Introduction

Computer Mediated Communication

As social creatures, humans spend most of their time communicating (e.g., working, playing, parenting, persuading, selling, Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd, 2016). And we not only communicate face to face (F2F), we also communicate by watching television, videos, listening to the radio, talking on the cell phone and/or using webcams (Burgoon, et al., 2016). Indeed, as digital technologies continue to create more universal and user-friendly communication platforms, human beings are even more connected (Pittman & Reich, 2016). That is the case of social media websites (i.e., online platforms that allow users to create and share content with their networks, like friends and followers) which have revolutionized how people interact with each other (Pittman & Reich, 2016). Thus, we can communicate through social media platforms (e.g., Twitter or Facebook) and through email, with social actors that we never met (Walther, 2011). More, as Pittman and Reich (2016) suggested, these types of platforms allow people to rapidly communicate about feelings and situations by sharing with their networks image and video files. This kind of communication resorts on computer mediated communication (CMC), a form of electronic message communications, synchronous or asynchronous, usually typewritten (Adrianson, 2001), or image-based, as noted above.

Communication is not a simple change of words and meanings, on the contrary, it is a result of the interaction of many factors (e.g., words, grammar, context, nonverbal cues, Rezapbek & Cochenour, 1998). During F2F communication, nonverbal cues (e.g., eye gaze, posture, distance,) are just as important as choosing the right words (Knapp, Hall, & Horgan, 2013). Indeed, the meaning of a message is complemented by nonverbal visual cues such as body language or facial expression (Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984; Knapp, et al., 2013; Rezapbek & Cochenour, 1998) or by paralinguistic cues such as the tone of voice (Kiesler, et al., 1984; Knapp & Daly, 2011). For example, facial expressions convey emotions during F2F communication and serve the purpose of helping receivers to understand the meaning of a verbal communication, by clarifying and reiterating those messages (Rezapbek & Cochenour, 1998). Moreover, Knapp and Daly (2011) suggest that people tend to believe in the veracity and spontaneity of nonverbal cues, and rely on such cues as a source of psychological and emotional information that helps the receiver in understanding another person's communication, by providing a deeper context. Hence, nonverbal cues serve the purpose of clarifying the verbal content of communication (Knapp & Daly, 2011).

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Nowadays, CMC has become as common as F2F communication (Derks, Fischer & Bos, 2008; Kraut, Mukhopadhyay, Szczypula, Kiesler, & Scherlis, 1999; Rodrigues, Lopes, Prada, Thompson, & Garrido, 2017). As mentioned earlier, people resort on CMC to communicate with different interlocutors. Indeed, CMC can be used in several contexts: to communicate intimately with a romantic partner (e.g., Luo, 2014; Rodrigues, Lopes, et al., 2017), to make professional communications at work (e.g., through email, Manganari & Dimara, 2017; Skovholt, Grønning, & Kankaaranta, 2014), to communicate with friends (or followers) through social media platforms (e.g., Pittman & Reich, 2016; Walther, 2011) or by just texting a message (Burgoon, et al., 2016). However, in CMC, contextual cues (e.g., verbal cues, physical context, observable information regarding social characteristics) are typically absent (Adrianson, 2001; Brown, Broderick, & Lee, 2007; Glikson, Cheshin, & Van Kleef, 2017; Perry & Werner-Wilson, 2011). There is frequently the need to complement the message when talking through CMC, since most users presented with only pure text have difficulties in perceiving the correct emotion, attitude and intentions of the message (Derks, Fischer, & Bos, 2008; Lo, 2008). For example, a sentence such as *"You are such a jerk"* may be interpreted literally or intending to convey irony or sadness (Weissman & Tanner, 2017). In this sense, the creation of emoticons – that is, smiley faces created with typographic symbols resembling facial expressions, such as ;) or :) - emerged as a way to complement written messages with social meaning (Walther & D'Addario, 2001). Emoticons serve as nonverbal surrogates, suggestive of facial expression, enhancing and promoting the exchange of emotional information by providing social cues that go beyond a written message, reinforcing it (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008; Manganari & Dimara, 2017; Rezabek & Cochenour, 1998). Therefore, an emoticon allows receivers of a message to properly understand the level and direction of an emotion and attitude, performing nonverbal communication functions (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008; Lo, 2008). Indeed, individuals may use emoticons to signal irony, reinforce positive messages or soften a request (Skovholt, et al., 2014). Thus, as long as the valence of an emoticon is congruent with the valence of a message, it guides the way in which the message should be interpreted (Derks, Bos, et al., 2008; Rodrigues, Lopes, 2017). For example, a positive message with a smile emoticon is rated more positively than a positive message alone, whereas a negative message with a frown is more negative than a negative message alone (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008).

Emojis emerged as a further development of emoticons. Compared to emoticons, emojis are colored, are not rotated by 90° and those representing facial expressions, the face is often delimited by a circle and may include multiple facial cues (Rodrigues, Prada, Gaspar, &

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Garrido, 2017). Moreover, these graphic symbols include not only representations of facial expressions (e.g., 😊), but also abstract concepts and emotions (e.g., 😍), animals (e.g., 🐼), plants (e.g., 🌱), activities (e.g., 🏀), gestures (e.g., 🙌) and objects (e.g., 📱, Novak, Smailović, Sluban, & Mozetič, 2015; Rodrigues, Prada, et al., 2017). Emojis usage has become particularly popular in multiple online communication means such as chat or email applications, as well as in social media platforms worldwide (Pavalanathan & Eisenstein, 2016). Not only there are currently thousands of emoji readily available (see, for instance, <https://emojipedia.org/>), but users can also develop custom emojis. For example, custom emojis can be created by uploading images into Slack (<https://slack.com/>), an application made for team communication inside organizations.

Emojis were developed with the intent of facilitating communication with more expressive messages (Novak, et al., 2015; Riordan, 2017). They are expected to give nonverbal cues, by conveying emotions, such as excitement (Kelly & Watts, 2015), by enabling a playful interaction (Kelly & Watts, 2015), and/or by softening negativity, as well as giving information about social rules (Sugiyama, 2015). Using the example above, we can convey irony if an emoji/emoticon is included: “*You are such a jerk ;)*” (Weissman & Tanner, 2017). Without emoticons or emojis, online messages could be ambiguous (Kaye, Wall, & Malone, 2016; Lo, 2008; Rodrigues, Lopes, et al., 2017; Riordan, 2017), and result, for example, in escalation of conflict (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008). Indeed, Kaye et al. (2016), collected open-ended responses in which participants referred using emoticon to make sure the message conveyed the right message, thus reducing ambiguity. Moreover, emojis can also increase the level of positive affect in the interpretation of a message. For example, overall, tweets/messages with (vs. without) emojis are perceived more positively (Novak, et al., 2015; Riordan, 2017; Rodrigues, Lopes, et al., 2017). However, emojis and emoticons do not seem to be able to change the intrinsic valence of the message (Riordan, 2017). For instance, Derks, Bos, and Grumbkow (2008) showed that a negative verbal message that included a smile emoticon was interpreted more positively than the same message without emoticon, but less positively than the positive verbal message. Therefore, this suggests that, during online communication, the verbal component of the message seems to be more determinant for message interpretation than the nonverbal part (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008). These conclusions are also corroborated by Riordan (2017): an emoji is capable of softening the negativity of a message, just like smiles and frowns do in F2F communication (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008), but seems incapable of making a negative message positive (Riordan, 2017). Being so, emojis may be used as a method to mediate social

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

relationships, as they are able of providing emotion information, maintaining or enhancing such relationships.

CMC is growing in popularity not only among individuals, but also between individuals and brands. Actually, most brands are now present in social media platforms, as a way to interact with consumers (Kwon & Sung, 2011) for sales and promotions, as well as customer service. The main goal is to nurture a long-term relationship with current or potential customers (Sung, Kim, Kwon, & Moon, 2010). To do so, brands call upon nonverbal cues in messages (e.g., emoticons, informal language), adding verbal nuances or other verbal subtleties that may reinforce the message and reveal emotions (Kwon & Sung, 2011). This is of great importance because emojis and emoticons are able of conveying emotional information (e.g., Kelly & Watts, 2015; Kwon & Sung, 2011; Rodrigues, Lopes, et al., 2017) and emotionally charged messages (e.g., on Twitter) are more likely to be shared (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). For example, the usage of emojis on Instagram posts results in higher engagement and interaction, with brands and businesses using emojis to tell stories in marketing campaigns (Gottke, 2017). Therefore, by using emojis, brands can induce cognitive and arousal-related effects that affect sharing behavior in social media communication (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013), which can promote the engagement of customers with the brand.

Several brands have recently used emojis in advertising and marketing campaigns. A common strategy is to develop own set of emojis or apps in which customers can interact using personalized emojis, indirectly promoting its products and/or augmenting customers' engagement with the brand (Neff, 2015; Wohl, 2016). For example, Pepsi recently aimed to indirectly draw attention to its products by developing several emojis (PepsiMoji campaign) designed to be used on pictures in social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, Johnson, 2016; Nudd, 2016), Dove created a branded emoji keyboard depicting curly-haired faces, Burger King created an emoji keyboard of chicken fries to celebrate the return of a fan favorite food and Ford developed a keyboard with cars (Greenberg, 2016). The idea is to bring consumers' attention towards the brand through the usage of the brand's emojis, serving the purpose of implicitly advertising the brand, instead of spamming ads and pop-ups, considering that we spend most of our time communicating through mobile devices (Greenberg, 2016). These potential benefits of emojis to brands have been recognized by social media platforms (e.g., Twitter launched an option that allows brands to pay for the promotion of its own emojis and stickers, giving users branded emojis to use over their photos, Johnson, 2016).

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Despite this widespread use of emojis in brand communication, research focusing the impact of using emoji in CMC between brands and consumers is still scarce. An exception is the recent study by Manganari and Dimara (2017) that examined how the presence of emoticons influenced the interpretation of negative and positive hotel reviews. The authors found that: in the case of positive reviews, the presence of emoticons has no impact in consumer's perceptions of booking intentions; in the case of negative reviews, the emoticon strengthens the review credibility, but attenuates attitudes towards the hotel and booking; in negative reviews, emotions also strengthen the negative effect of review valence on consumer's attitude and intention regarding the hotel (Manganari & Dimara, 2017). Likewise, we aim to examine how the inclusion of a positive emoji in a message (voluntary product callback) modulates brand perception. Specifically, besides overall evaluation of the brand, we will assess the impact of the emoji on measures related to brand personality and brand perception (e.g., favorability, corporate social responsibility, intention of future purchases).

Brand Perception

It is important to relate the ways a brand communicates with customers and the consequences that such behaviors have in consumers' perception. As explained in the last section, brands communicate through advertising and by being active in social media platforms, with regular posts and content, often featuring emojis. However, brands can also communicate with customers for less positive motives, like when recalling a defective product while dealing with a product-harm crisis (Klein & Dawar, 2004). Therefore, it is important to evaluate how less positive communications can affect brand perception, especially when the communication relies on nonverbal cues such as emojis.

Dawar and Pillutla (2000) define a product-harm crisis as well-publicized instances of defective or dangerous products. During such moments, the market receives negative information about a company and its product and, thus, companies assume consumers' attitudes will be negatively impacted (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000). Product harm-crisis can cause serious survival problems to the company, due to the potential financial costs, negative effects on sales and potential destruction of corporate image (Cleeren, Dekimpe, & Helsen, 2008; Siomkos, 1999; Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, Siomkos, & Chatzipanagiotou, 2009; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, Chatzipanagiotou, & Pantouvakis, 2009). Because of that, companies need to handle properly these situations (Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al., 2009). Hence why they choose to communicate information to its customers about its efforts to manage the crisis (Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994), seeking to improve customers' opinions

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

(Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994), by incurring in voluntary product recalls to minimize damage to their brands (Klein & Dawar, 2004). Since the news of a product callback is a type of negative information, consumers are more likely to deepen the information more heavily than communications revealing a product's strengths (negative bias, Siomkos, 1989). The organization response to a crisis can vary, namely it can: deny responsibility for the defect; make an involuntary callback, after an intervention (e.g., legal or governmental imposition); make a voluntary callback, before any external intervention; or perform a super effort intervention, in which a company tries hard to communicate a social responsible image, making the recall of the product, while simultaneously compensating the consumers and/or making the recall process very easy for them, thus, showing great concern with their wellbeing (Siomkos, 1989; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009). Companies that act prior to any external intervention are seen as more social responsible, especially if they incur in the last type of voluntary intervention (Siomkos, 1989; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Siomkos & Shrivastava, 1993) and, thus, following the super effort intervention, future purchases are less negatively influenced by the crisis, the same being true for voluntary recalls (Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994). That was the case of Ikea, when, in 2016, following the death of children caused by unstable dressers and chests with tip-over hazard, the brand recalled all the twenty-nine million defective models, offering refund or reparation (Sakoui, 2016).

Thus, the success of brand behaviors, when seeking to minimize the effects of a product-harm crisis, depends on four major factors: company's reputation and corporate social responsibility (CSR), external effects (such as media coverage), and company's response to the crisis and the severity of the crises (Siomkos, 1989; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al., 2009; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009). The company's reputation is an important factor, with well-known companies with positive image suffering a minor impact, contrary to less known companies that can suffer greater impacts (Jolly & Mowen, 1985; Siomkos, 1989; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Siomkos & Shrivastava, 1993). This is due to the fact that consumers have prior beliefs/perceptions about a brand, with prior perceptions of CSR influencing customers' blame perceptions (internal locus, stability and controllability are all related to blame, Klein & Dawar, 2004). McWilliams and Siegel (2001) define CSR as actions that seek to serve social good, beyond the interests of the firm and the law itself (i.e., actions that are taken by the will of the company, not imposed by the law). Communications of CSR activities boost purchase intentions and promote the enhancement of evaluations of the brand (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), as well as increase

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

loyalty behaviors (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007) and mitigate responses to negative publicity (Klein & Dawar, 2004). The level of CSR perceived by customers can, then, be a protective factor during a crisis, as the reputation that derives from those actions may protect the company's image (Cheah, et al., 2007; McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al., 2009). The Volkswagen scandal regarding diesel engines, publicly revealed in 2015, is an example of a company being accused of acting in an irresponsible way due to its practices (Stockton, 2015). However, probably due to its previous reputation, it is still one of the most popular automobile manufacturers across the world, despite having suffered in terms of market value and sales. This is of great importance as CSR, if seen by the lenses of consumers (Klein & Dawar, 2004), can comprehend designing products with quality, adding value and satisfying customers (Waddock & Smith, 2000). In that sense, a callback can exert positive effects if communicated as a socially responsible behavior (Jolly & Mowen, 1985; Mowen, Jolly, & Nickel, 1980). Indeed, if the consumer perceives product callback as a social responsible practice, the adverse reactions regarding the recall can be mitigated (Cheah, Chan, & Chieng, 2007), with the recall being seen as positive efforts towards corporate responsibility and accountability (Cheah, et al., 2007). Regarding the severity of the crisis, perceived danger of the defect was one of the best predictors of a subject's favorability towards a brand (Mowen, et al., 1980). Severity is usually measured in terms of the number and severity of injuries (Coombs, 1998; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009), or even the occurrence of deaths (Coombs, 1998; Mowen & Ellis, 1981; (Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009), harm to the environment (Coombs, 1998; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009) and/or financial damage (Coombs, 1998). Coombs (1998) showed that crisis damage can be analyzed in terms of the amount of damage and seriousness of injuries, with participants classifying little property damage and non-serious injuries as "minor damage" and high property damage and serious injuries as "major damage". Lee (2004), also divided severity in two categories (extreme severity and high severity), suggesting future research to investigate with a wider range of variation in the difference of severity levels. Moreover, severity has an impact on the emotional response of stakeholders (Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009) and companies dealing with high-injury (vs. low-injury) crisis are perceived less favorably (Mowen & Ellis, 1981). The higher the perceived severity of the crisis, the more blame is attributed to the company. This influences future behaviors towards the brand, given that if the situation is of great (vs. lower) severity, costumers are less likely to buy other products from the brand (Laufer, Gillespie, McBride, & Gonzalez, 2005).

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

The perceived level of CSR of the brand and the brand's responsibility for the defect are also good predictors of the favorability towards a brand (Mowen, et al., 1980). Consumers tend to seek for a reason for the defect, and, depending on the cause inferred for the failure, it will influence how the consumer will respond (Folkes, 1984). Consequently, consumer's attributions are particularly important in this context, constituting one of the basis for brand judgements and subsequent behaviors towards the brand (Klein & Dawar, 2004). According to Weiner's (1980) attribution model, judgements of responsibility regarding the responsibility for the defect are anchored in three dimensions: the locus of the behavior (internal or external); the stability of the behavior (unchanging or temporary) and the controllability of the behavior (within or outside control). Consumer reactions to product failures vary as function of those dimensions (Folkes, 1984), such that if the locus is internal and the behavior stable and controllable, consumers tend to attribute responsibility to the actor (brand), along with blame and anger feelings; if the locus is external and the behavior temporary and uncontrollable, attributions will tend to be made to external factors (Folkes, 1984).

As such, we seek to understand how the perceived severity of a given defect (low vs. high), during a callback situation, affects consumers' brand perception. Also, being corporate reputation a critical dimension to ensure company's success, as it influences positively variables related to costumers' perceptions (trusting a brand, being loyal to a given brand and/or organization), it is important to measure the impact of certain behaviors from a given brand, such as the use of emojis when contacting with a customer, as it can be related to the opinion that a customer can build about a given organization (Walsh & Beatty, 2007).

Brand Personality

Because the way a brand communicates (e.g., using emojis), along with the type of communication (e.g., making the recall of a defective product during a product-harm crisis), can be seen as a brand behavior (Aaker & Fournier, 1995), it is expected that a given personality trait may be associated towards that brand. Therefore, it is important to understand the concept of brand personality, how it emerges from consumers' perceptions, how it can be measured and how it is used by brands and marketers.

According to Aaker (1997), brand personality refers to the set of human characteristics that can be associated or imbued to a brand. Indeed, consumers assign human characteristics to brands (Aaker, 1997; Sung & Kim, 2010). For example, Apple is thought to be "exciting", due to its cool design, while Microsoft is seen as "intelligent", because of the production of

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

intelligent software and market success (Maehle, Otnes, & Supphellen, 2011). Such association of human characteristics to brands has several potential benefits to the brands (Freling & Forbes, 2005), namely: it can increase consumer preference (Sirgy, 1982) and positive emotions in consumers (Biel, 1993; Sung & Kim, 2010); it can increase levels of trust and loyalty (Fournier, 1998) and provide a basis for product differentiation (Aaker, 1996). Just as for humans, brand personalities are expected to reflect stable and enduring traits (Freling & Forbes, 2005). Therefore, the development of brand personality by marketers promotes the differentiation of a brand from its competitors (Sung & Kim, 2010). At the individual level, consumers use brands to serve their needs, creating connections between their self-concepts and brand images (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). For example, in a study by Maehle and colleagues (2011) participants reported using Apple products due to its uniqueness in terms of design, which made them also feel unique. The self-concept/brand connections are highly relevant for the creation of brand equity (i.e., the value, defined in economic terms, of a brand that derives from consumer perception, going beyond the product itself, Aaker & Biel, 1993) and for nurturing long-term consumer-brand relationships (Sung & Kim, 2010). Moreover, brand personality can be used as an extrinsic product attribute, influencing how consumers process information regarding a product (Freling & Forbes, 2005), particularly when the evaluation of intrinsic product attributes (e.g., physical composition of a product) is difficult (Freling & Forbes, 2005; Sung & Kim, 2010), by providing a base for differentiation (Freling & Forbes, 2005).

A brand can be seen as a contributing member of a relationship with a customer, and consumers may infer traits from the intentional behaviors in which a brand incurs (Aaker & Fournier, 1995). Such brand behaviors can go from advertising campaigns to coupons delivered (Aaker & Fournier, 1995), or even engaging in conversations in virtual communities with customers (Kwon & Sung, 2011). The inferred traits are typically categorized in five personality dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Aaker, 1997). Still, “sincere” personalities and “exciting” personalities (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004) are the most prevalent in marketing research (Aaker, et al., 2004), due to its similarity to two of the dimensions identified by Fletcher and colleagues (1999) that are relevant for interpersonal relationships, and capacity of capturing the majority of variance in personality rankings for brands (Aaker, 1997).

On the one hand, sincerity (e.g., nurturance, warmth, family orientation, traditionalism, Aaker, 1997) can induce inferences of trustworthiness and dependability (Aaker, 1999; Sung & Kin, 2010), thus improving relationships between customers and

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

brands (Aaker, et al., 2004). Therefore, both small and bigger companies aim to promote the association between their brands and the sincere trait (to be seen as caring and warm; or down-to-earth, respectively). For example, Swaminathan, Stilley and Ahluwalia (2009) were able to convey sincere personality to a fictional brand by using a tagline with the word “meaningful”, along with a presentation of individuals interacting with friends and family in a print ad. On the other hand, the exciting personality is built around the idea of energy and youthfulness (Aaker, 1997), attempting differentiation through irreverent advertising, peculiar brand logos and the use of slang/informal/cool language (Aaker, et al., 2004). For example, Portuguese telecommunications companies, such as NOS, created specific services for younger customers (WTF), and communicated with informal and cool language, using famous Portuguese youtubers to promote the product (Marques, 2013). Indeed, brands tend to pursue exciting personalities when seeking for the attention of younger customers, repositioning towards increased cultural vitality and seeking differentiation from market leaders (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004). Moreover, perceiving a brand as exciting also fosters positive brand affect towards that same brand. However, an exciting personality can be in disadvantage when compared to a sincere personality, as it may induce an idea of being less legitimate for long-term relationships (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004).

Aaker's pivotal work (1997) has inspired much of the research regarding brand personality, in particular as it presents an instrument to assess this construct. However, Aaker's brand personality measure has been criticized because: it includes/evaluates dimensions other dimensions beyond personality (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003); the factor structure does not generalize for analyses at the respondent level (Austin, Sigauw, & Mattila, 2003); and has not been replicated across cultures (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Geuens and colleagues (2009) proposed a new measure, consisting of twelve items, aggregated in five factors (i.e., responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity and emotionality) that relate to the big five personality traits. We choose to use this new instrument as it was shown to be reliable at several levels (between-brand between-category, between-brand within-category and between-respondent comparisons), as well as valid cross-culturally.

To sum, by engaging consumers in communication through social media platforms, marketers can convey brands' personality (Kwon & Sung, 2011). Thus, since the presence of brands in social media may increase the tendency for people to associate human characteristics to brands (anthropomorphize), as a marketing strategy (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007), marketers animate and humanize their brands by attributing human characteristics to them (Kwon & Sung, 2011). This induces trait inferences that summarize consumer

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

perceptions about brands, while also elevating the brand to the status of a relational partner (Fournier, 1995), which can, then, foster the sense of a brand having a meaningful personality, having a distinctive image, different from competitors (Aaker, 1997). According to Cho (2006), putting brand stories on blogs promotes an association between brands and personality traits, resulting from informal language (e.g., emojis).

Aims and Hypotheses

To our knowledge, few research has been conducted in the field of CMC relating the use of emojis with brand personality and brand perception (including brand personality and CSR). In the current experiment, we created a fictional scenario, in which a fictional brand (Electra) communicates a defective product recall, resorting on CMC (i.e., it includes an emoji on the written message).

As reviewed, product-harm crisis negatively impacts consumers' opinion (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000) and sales (Cleeren, et al., 2008; Simkos, 1999; Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al. 2009; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009). We were particularly interested in the severity of the crisis and defect because it is a predictor of favorability towards a brand (Mowen, Jolly & Nickell, 1980). Therefore, the severity of the defect was also manipulated (i.e., lower vs. higher severity) in the scenario.

Emoji usually convey positivity to a message (Novak et al., 2015; Riordan, 2017) and are able to soften the negativity of a message (Riordan, 2017). Emojis also constitute an instance of informal communication, which in the marketing communication context can be seen as an attempt to evoke an exciting personality. On the other hand, showing concern with customers by voluntarily recalling a product (Laufer & Coombs, 2006) can be seen as a brand behavior (Aaker & Fournier, 1995), which can result in the emergence of a sincere personality, which typically results from behaviors related to care and warmth (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004). Therefore, since the content related to exciting and sincere dimensions of the measure developed by Aaker (1997) is similar, respectively, to the content of activity and responsibility personality traits from the new measure of Geuens and colleagues (2009), we expect similar results.

Likewise, based on the nature of the message (a callback of a defective product) and the specific features of the CMC (inclusion of an emoji vs. control), we expected participants to: associate specific personality traits to the brand (e.g., active, due to the presence of the emoji; or responsible, due to the nature of the message), while also reporting different levels

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

of favorability and buying intentions, depending on the severity level. Specifically, we expected to observe:

H1: A main effect of the emoji manipulation, such that participants in the emoji condition (vs. control) would: perceive the brand more positively (e.g., higher favorability, higher rebuying intentions, more socially responsible, less responsibility for the defect attributed to the brand, association to an active and/or emotional brand personality trait), and have a more stable opinion about the situation (e.g., higher confidence in the own opinion about the brand, higher perception of the message being objective, higher perception of the information being trustworthy).

H2: A main effect of the severity manipulation, such that participants in the higher severity condition (vs. lower severity) would perceive the brand more negatively (e.g., lower favorability, lower rebuying intentions, higher danger perceived, less socially responsible, more responsibility for the defect attributed to the brand, association to a responsible brand personality)

H3: The interaction between emoji and severity of the defect, with emoji (vs. control) exerting a more positive effect on participants in the lower severity (vs. higher severity) condition (e.g., favorability towards the brand, on rebuying intentions, lower danger perceived, lower responsibility for the defect attributed to the brand).

CHAPTER I

Method

Participants and Design

The sample included 201 individuals (62.4% women, $M_{Age} = 28.31$ years, $SD = 7.59$; age range: 18-64 years), who volunteered to participate in an anonymous web survey. Most respondents had university level education (77.3%), and were either employees (55.4%) or students (35.6%). Participants were randomly distributed by the four conditions resulting of the following design: 2 (Emoji: present vs. absent) x 2 (Severity: sigh vs. low). Both factors were manipulated between-subjects.

Instruments

Brand personality. To evaluate respondents' perception of brand personality of the fictional brand (i.e., Electra) used in this study, we used the measure developed by Geuens and colleagues (2009). This new measure of brand personality results from the combination of items from Aaker's (1997) scale that reflect personality and items that measure human personality from several Big Five questionnaires, as well as traits referred by participants during spontaneous recall tasks. Specifically, this new measure consists of five factors (total of 12 items) – Responsibility ("Down to Earth", "Stable", "Responsible"), Activity ("Active", "Dynamic", "Innovative"), Aggressiveness ("Aggressive", "Bold"), Simplicity ("Ordinary", "Simple") and Emotionality ("Romantic", "Sentimental"). The items were translated from English to Portuguese by two experts independently and discrepancies in translations were discussed until a consensus was found (see Appendix B).

Participants were asked to indicate how characteristic each trait was of the fictitious brand, using a 7-point rating scale (1 = *Not characteristic*, 7 = *Very characteristic*). The internal consistency of the sample, for each subscale, was then measured, with Responsibility reporting $\alpha = 0.36$ (this lead to the exclusion of the item "Down to Earth", with the internal consistency rising to $\alpha = 0.72$), Activity $\alpha = 0.80$, Aggressiveness $\alpha = 0.56$, Simplicity $\alpha = 0.65$ and Emotionality $\alpha = 0.82$.

Brand and company perception. To assess brand and social responsibility perceptions, we adapted the measure presented by Jolly and Mowen (1985) which includes three factors ("Perception of the company", "Objectivity of the presentation of the information and the trustworthiness of the source of information" and "Certainty of the perception of the company, the danger of the defect and the responsibility of the company for the defect"). However, due to low reliability on one of the factors on our sample (the third factor,

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

“certainty of the perception of the company, the danger of the defect and the responsibility of the company for the defect”), we decided to analyse the eight items individually. The items are: “How favourable/unfavourable is your perception of Electra” (1 = *Unfavourable*, 7 = *Favourable*); “To what extent do you consider that Electra was socially responsible” (1 = *Slightly responsible*, 7 = *Very responsible*); “Would you buy other products from Electra” (1 = *I certainly would not*, 7 = *I certainly would*); “To what extent was the information presented in the press release objective” (1 = *Slightly objective*, 7 = *Very objective*); “To what extent was the information presented in the press release trustworthy” (1 = *Slightly reliable*, 7 = *Very reliable*); “To what extent are you confident about your own opinion of the brand” (1 = *Slightly confident*, 7 = *Very confident*); “To what extent do you consider it dangerous to use the dishwashing machine” (1 = *Slightly dangerous*, 7 = *Very dangerous*); “To what extent is Electra responsible for the defect of the product” (1 = *It certainly is not responsible*, 7 = *It certainly is responsible*).

The eight items were adapted to the scenario and translated from English to Portuguese by two experts independently and discrepancies in translations were discussed until a consensus was found.

Procedure

The data was collected from February 25th to March 11th. Participants were invited through social media and online discussion forums to collaborate on a web survey about consumer psychology focused on the relation between brands and consumers. After clicking on the provided hyperlink, participants were directed to a secure webpage in Qualtrics containing information about the goals of the study, its expected duration (approximately 7 min), and ethical considerations (i.e., anonymity, confidentiality and the possibility to withdraw from the study at any point). After agreeing to collaborate in the study (by checking the “I agree option”), participants were asked to answer sociodemographic questions (e.g., sex, age, education and occupation).

Next, we presented a general description of a fictional brand (Electra) that described Electra’s core values (e.g., innovation, quality, performance and reliability), made a reference to its business area and announced the amount of investment made in research and development of its products each year. After that, a manipulation check question was presented, in order to assess the overall perception of the brand (the scale was a 7-point rating scale, ranging from 1 = *Unfavourable* to 7 = *Favourable*). Participants were then asked to read a press release from Electra, in which a recall of a defective product (dishwasher) was

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

being announced, due to defect on one of its components. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of four conditions (see Figure 1), as a result of the crossing of the severity of the defect (high vs. low) and the inclusion of a smiling emoji (present vs. absent)¹.

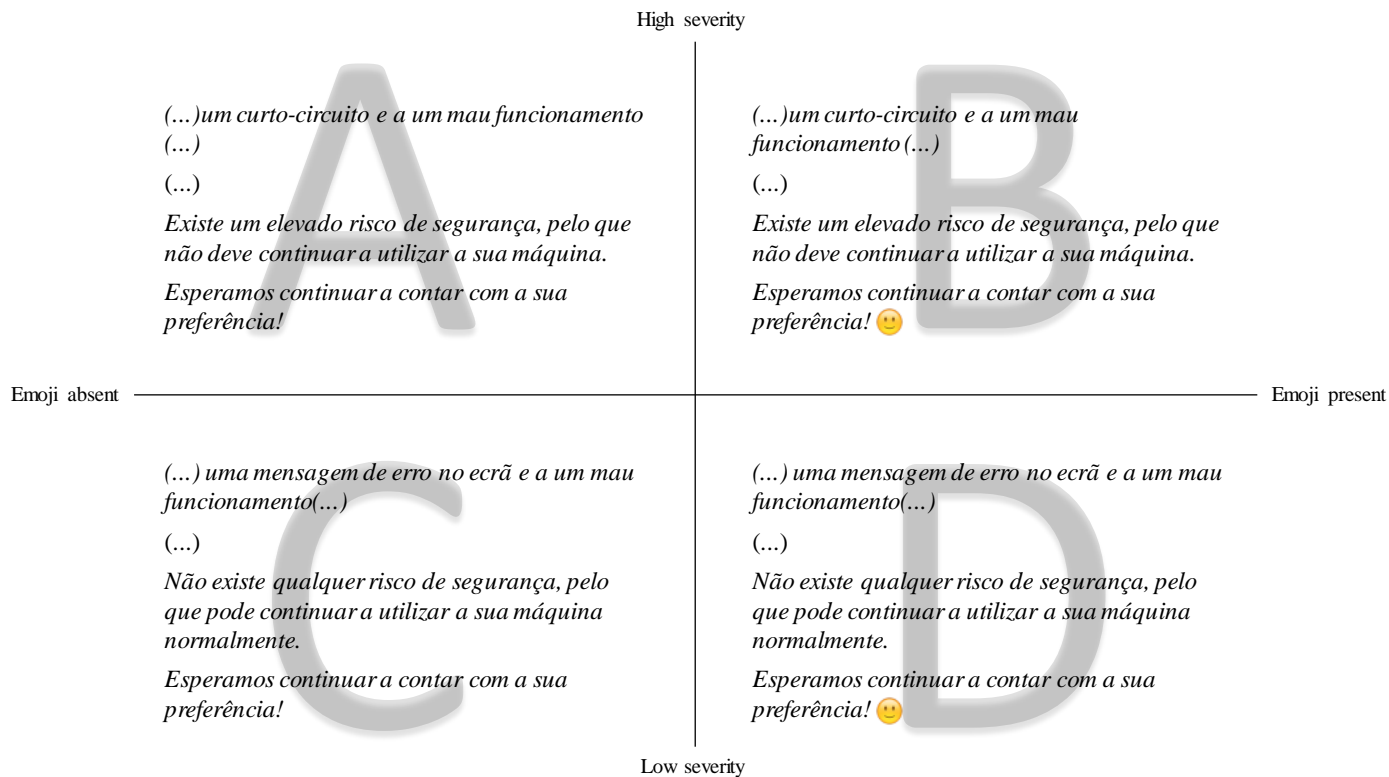


Figure 1. Scenarios according to experimental condition.

As shown in Figure 1, in the high severity conditions (A and B) the message stated that the defect could lead to a short-circuit and that due to a high safety risk the machine should not be used. In contrast, in the low severity conditions (C and D) the message stated that the defect could lead to an error message on the machine's screen and that, because it did not constitute a safety risk, the machine could still be used. The same farewell message was included in all scenarios, and in conditions B and D, a smiling emoji was also included.

Before reading the press release, but after reading the general description of Electra, participants were asked to answer one single question regarding:

- overall perception of the brand (7-point scale, 1 = *Unfavorable* to 7 = *Favorable*);

After reading the press release, participants were asked to answer a set of questions (see Appendix A), namely:

¹ This emoji (U+1F642) was selected from the Lisbon Emoji and Emoticon Database (LEED, Rodrigues, Prada, et al., 2017) and was shown to be highly familiar, clear and meaningful as well as positive to reinforce the pleasantness of the farewell message.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

b) brand perception measures (eight items adapted from Jolly & Mowen, 1985, 7-point rating scales);

c) manipulation check questions regarding severity level (four items, 7-point rating scales): valence of the message presented in the press release (1 = *Negative* to 7 = *Positive*); how worried would the participant be if he own such a defective product (1 = *Not worried at all* to 7 = *Very worried*); how grave was the issue (1 = *Small severity* to 7 = *High severity*); and how likely would they schedule the picking up of the defective machine (1 = *I certainly would not* to 7 = *I certainly would*) (Appendix A)

d) the new measure of brand personality (Geuens, et al., 2009) (Appendix B)

e) manipulation check questions regarding emoji presence (one item, 7-point rating scale): “*Did the message include any emoji (i.e., a coloured figure representing a face)?*” (1 = *It certainly did not*, 7 = *It certainly did*). Participants who were not sure that the message did not include any emoji (i.e., all that responded 2 to 7 in the previous question) were asked to identify, from a list of five emojis (selected from the LEED, Rodrigues, Prada et al., 2017), which one was present in the message. These emojis were selected from the LEED (Rodrigues, Prada, et al., 2017) database and were all similar, all smiling, except for one, that presented a neutral face. These emojis were presented in fixed order.

f) attitudes towards the suitability of brands' usage of smiling emoji in several scenarios (four items, 7-point rating scales): “*To what extent do you consider the use of emoji adequate in the following scenarios...*”: “social media posts”, “social media replies to consumer”, “advertising of new products” or “press releases communicating defective products and call backs” (7-point scale, 1 = *Not adequate at all*, 7 = *Very adequate*).

In the end, an acknowledgement message was presented, thanking participants, followed by the investigator's e-mail address.

CHAPTER II

Results

Statistical analyses were completed using SPSS, version 23.0. and only complete surveys were retained for analysis thus, there were no missing cases.

The analysis initiates with manipulation checks regarding the severity level of the scenario and of presence of emoji. Following, we analysed the direct effects and interactions of our two independent variables (emoji's presence and severity level) in our outcome variables (brand and company perception and brand personality).

Manipulation check

Severity level. To check the manipulation of severity of the defect described in the scenario (press release), we compared the evaluation of the brand (Electra) and the perception of the severity of the defect (one item asking directly how severe was the technical failure and two indirect measures, one assessing the worry resulting from the situation and another assessing if the participant would schedule for the pickup and return of the machine).

Overall, the brand was evaluated positively prior to the presentation of the press release ($M = 5.38$; $SD = 1.32$), $t(201) = 14.84$, $p < .001$, (t test against scale midpoint: 4). Importantly, this a priori evaluation was equivalent for low severity ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.41$) and high severity ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.23$) conditions, $t < 1$. As expected, after reading the press release, participants in the low severity condition ($M = 5.76$, $SD = 1.34$) showed a more positive opinion about Electra than those in the high severity condition ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.62$), $t(200) = 2.79$, $p = .006$, $d = 0.39$.

Analysing the perception of severity of the defect reinforces the idea that the manipulation for severity worked: those in the low severity condition reported the problem to be of lower severity ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 1.66$) than those in the high severity condition ($M = 5.76$, $SD = 1.36$), $t(200) = - 8.91$, $p < .001$, $d = - 1.26$. Likewise, participants in the high severity condition reported higher levels of worry about the defective product ($M = 5.53$, $SD = 1.41$) than those in the low severity condition ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.76$), $t(200) = - 4.54$, $p < .001$, $d = - 0.64$. Finally, participants in the high severity condition reported a higher probability of scheduling the pickup of the defective product ($M = 6.89$, $SD = 0.45$) than those in the low severity condition ($M = 6.39$, $SD = 1.09$), $t(200) = - 4.23$, $p < .001$, $d = - 0.59$.

In sum, based on the differences found between participants in the low versus high severity conditions across several measures, the severity manipulation was successful.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Emoji's presence. As expected, participants in the emoji condition reported that they were more certain of seeing it ($M = 4.96, SD = 2.56$) than those in the no-emoji condition ($M = 2.04, SD = 1.57$), $t(200) = -9.86, p < .001, d = - 1.39$.

These results corroborate that this manipulation was also successful.

Impact of Emoji Presence and Severity of the Defect on Brand and Company Perception

The eight items used to evaluate brand/company perception (Jolly & Mowen, 1985) were analysed individually, by performing a univariate ANOVA considering ratings of each item as the dependent variable and severity level and emoji's presence as the between-subjects factors (results are summarized in Table 1).

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Table 1. Mean Evaluations across Brand and Company Perception Dimensions (Overall, according to Severity and Emoji Conditions)

Subscale	Overall	Severity		Emoji	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	Low Severity <i>M (SD)</i>	High Severity <i>M (SD)</i>	No-emoji <i>M (SD)</i>	With-emoji <i>M (SD)</i>
1.How favourable is your perception of Electra	5.48* (1.51)	5.76 ^a (1.34)	5.18 ^b (1.62)	5.52 ^c (1.51)	5.42 ^c (1.51)
2. (...) are you confident about your own opinion of the brand	5.15* (1.38)	5.32 ^a (1.31)	4.98 ^a (1.43)	5.24 ^c (1.38)	5.06 ^c (1.38)
3. (...) is it dangerous to use the dishwashing machine	3.93 (2.15)	2.64 ^a (1.66)	5.24 ^b (1.77)	4.02 ^c (2.09)	3.82 ^c (2.22)
4. (...) was Electra was socially responsible	6.12* (1.12)	6.13 ^a (1.12)	6.11 ^a (1.12)	6.15 ^c (1.12)	6.08 ^c (1.12)
5.Would you buy other products from Electra	5.10* (1.48)	5.35 ^a (1.35)	4.85 ^b (1.57)	5.14 ^c (1.58)	5.06 ^c (1.37)
6. (...) is Electra responsible for the defect of the product	5.58* (1.55)	5.53 (1.63)	5.64 (1.47)	5.50 ^c (1.56)	5.67 ^c (1.54)
7. (...) was the information presented in the press release objective	5.88* (1.40)	5.83 (1.39)	5.92 (1.42)	5.86 ^c (1,38)	5.90 ^c (1.44)
8. (...) was the information presented in the press release trustworthy	5.73* (1.21)	5.57 ^a (1.25)	5.89 ^b (1.16)	5.78 ^c (1.17)	5.67 ^c (1.26)

Note. * Different from scale midpoint (i.e., 4), all $p < .001$. Means that share the same superscript - ^{a,b} (means associated with the main effect of the severity of the defect manipulation) and - ^{c,d} (means associated with the main effect of emoji presence) - did not differ significantly.

Overall, participants rated all items (except item 3) significantly above the midpoint of the scale (see Table 1). This means that participants reported high favourability towards the brand, perceived it as highly socially responsible and were highly confidence in their own opinion about Electra. Moreover, despite perceiving the brand as highly responsible for the defect of the product being recalled, participants also reported that they would buy Electra products in future. Regarding the overall ratings of the message, participants perceived the

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

press release as being highly objective and trustworthy. Finally, the usage of the defective product (i.e., dishwashing machine) was only perceived as moderately dangerous.

As shown in Table 1, we found a main effect of the severity manipulation in the following variables:

- (a) customers' favourability towards the brand (item 1): those in the high severity condition ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.62$) reported a less favourable perception of Electra than those in the low severity condition ($M = 5.76$, $SD = 1.35$), $F(1,198) = 7.51$, $p = .007$, $\eta_p^2 = .037$;
- (b) perceived danger of the defect (item 3): those in the high severity condition reporting that using the product would be more dangerous ($M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.77$) than those in the low severity condition ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.66$), $F(1,198)=116.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .370$;
- (c) future purchases (item 5): participants in the high severity condition reported that they would be less likely to buy another product from Electra ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.57$) than those in the low severity group ($M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.35$), $F(1,198) = 5.59$, $p = .019$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$;
- (d) trustworthiness of the information (item 8): participants in the high severity condition perceived the information in the press release as more trustworthy ($M = 5.89$, $SD = 1.16$) than those in the low severity condition ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 1.25$), $F(1,198) = 3.97$, $p = .048$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$.

Contrary to our expectations, no main effect of emoji presence across variables emerged, $ps > .308$.

Severity level and emoji presence only showed significant interactions for two variables related to brand perception: confidence in the opinion about the brand (Item 2, see Figure 2), and willingness to buy another product from the brand (Item 5, see Figure 3).

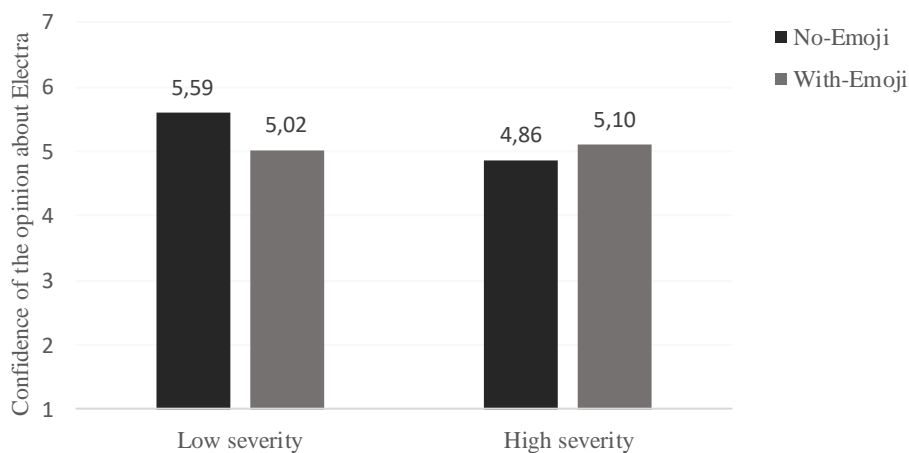


Figure 2. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji's presence on the confidence of the opinion about Electra.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

As shown in Figure 2, in the low severity condition, participants that were exposed to a message containing an emoji ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.41$) reported a lower confidence in their own opinion about Electra than the ones exposed to a message without an emoji ($M = 5.59$, $SD = 1.17$), $t(198) = 2.19$, $p = .035$, $d = 0.31$. In contrast, participants in the high severity condition, showed similar confidence in their opinion about the brand, irrespectively of being exposed the emoji ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 1.36$) or not ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 1.49$), $t < 1$.

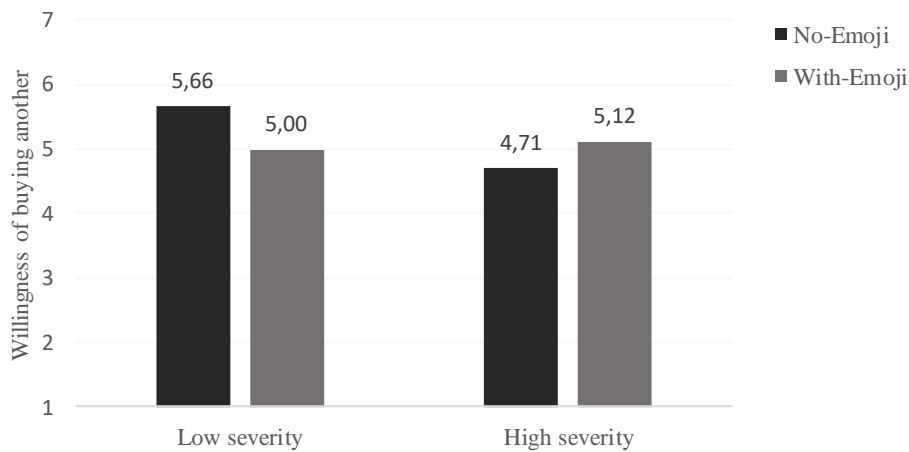


Figure 3. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji's presence on the willingness to buy another Electra product.

Regarding the willingness to buy another Electra product, as shown in Figure 3, in the low severity condition, participants that were exposed to a message containing an emoji ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.39$) reported a lower willingness of acquiring another product from Electra than the ones exposed to a message without an emoji ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.27$), $t(198) = 2.34$, $p = .020$, $d = 0.33$. In contrast, participants in the high severity condition, reported similar willingness to buy Electra products in the future, irrespectively of being exposed the emoji ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.35$) or not ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(198) = -1.86$, $p = .064$, $d = -0.26$ (Appendix C).

Impact of Emoji Presence and Severity of the Defect on Brand personality

The five subscales of the brand personality scale (Geuens, et al., 2009) were analysed individually, by performing a univariate ANOVA considering mean ratings on each subscale as the dependent variable and severity level and emoji's presence as the between-subjects factors (results are summarized in Table 2).

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Table 2. Mean Evaluations across Brand Personality Subscales (Overall, according to Severity and Emoji Conditions).

Subscale	Overall	Severity		Emoji	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	Low Severity <i>M (SD)</i>	High Severity <i>M (SD)</i>	No-emoji <i>M (SD)</i>	With-emoji <i>M (SD)</i>
Responsibility	5.16* (1.09)	5.33 ^a (.99)	4.99 ^b (1.16)	5.25 ^c (1.06)	5.07 ^c (1.11)
Activity	5.11* (1.04)	5.18 ^a (1.07)	5.05 ^a (1.02)	5.21 ^c (1.09)	5.01 ^c (.98)
Aggressiveness	3.28* (1.17)	3.27 ^a (1.18)	3.29 ^a (1.17)	3.37 ^c (1.18)	3.19 ^c (1.17)
Simplicity	4.12 (1.12)	4.03 ^a (1.19)	4.21 ^a (1.02)	4.05 ^c (1.15)	4.19 ^c (1.08)
Emotionality	2.45* (1.39)	2.59 ^a (1.45)	2.31 ^a (1.32)	2.29 ^c (1.41)	2.62 ^c (1.36)

Note. * Different from scale midpoint (i.e., 4), all $p < .001$. Means that share the same superscript - ^{a,b} (means associated with the main effect of the severity of the defect manipulation) and - ^{c,d} (means associated with the main effect of emoji presence) - did not differ significantly.

Overall ratings of the brand, suggest that participants reported the brand as highly responsible and highly active. In contrast, they perceived the brand as low in aggressiveness and emotionality, and as moderate in simplicity (see Table 2).

Contrary to our expectations, and as observed for the brand and company perception dimensions, the emoji presence did not influence how participants perceived brand personality. Indeed, as shown in Table 2, overall no significant effects of emoji presence and severity of the defect were detected on brand personality subscales. The exception was the main effect of severity on the responsibility dimension, such that participants in the in the low severity condition ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 0.99$) reported Electra as being more responsible than those in the high severity condition ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.16$), $F(1,198) = 4.64$, $p = .033$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$ (Appendix D).

Additional Analysis

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

One of the items used for the check of severity of the defect manipulation required participants to take the perspective of the Electra customer receiving information about owning a defective product. They were then asked to report how worried they would be about that defect. As already reported, the severity of the defect influenced such ratings, $F(1,198) = 20.01, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .092$. We also explored if this rating was influenced by emoji presence. Although no main effect of emoji presence was observed, $F(1,198) = 1.42, p = .236, \eta_p^2 = .007$, a significant interaction between emoji presence and severity of the defect emerged, $F(1,198) = 5.13, p = .025, \eta_p^2 = .025$ (see Figure 4).

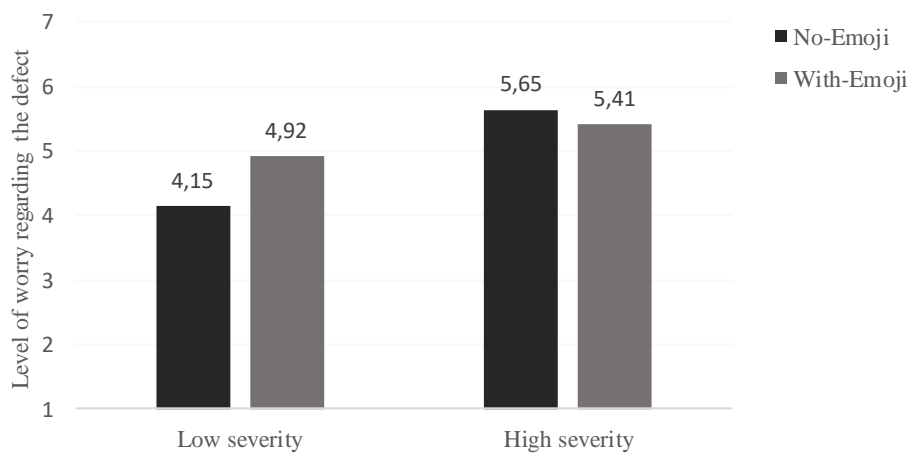


Figure 4. Interaction effect of severity level and emoji's presence on the level of worry regarding the defect.

As shown in Figure 4, in the low severity condition, participants that were exposed to a message containing an emoji reported a higher level of worry ($M = 4.92, SD = 1.75$) than the ones exposed to a message without an emoji ($M = 4.15, SD = 1.69$), $t(198) = 2.45, p = .015, d = 0.35$. In contrast, participants in the high severity condition, reported similar levels of worry, irrespectively of being exposed the emoji ($M = 5.65, SD = 1.31$) or not ($M = 5.41, SD = 1.53$), $t < 1$.

Attitudes towards emoji use in marketing communication. We assessed participants' attitudes towards the suitability of brands' emoji usage in different forms of communication. We conducted a principal components analysis with Varimax rotation with the four items. Based on this analysis (Appendix E), all items were retained and two factors were extracted using the Kaiser criterion, accounting for 77.71% of the variance: 1. Suitability of emoji usage in social media, comprising two items ($\alpha = .61$), and 2. Suitability of emoji usage in product communication, also comprising two items ($\alpha = .77$). For each factor, scores were

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

computed by averaging the respective items, with higher scores meaning higher agreement with emoji usage.

Results show that participants agreed that brands using emoji on the social media context is adequate ($M = 4.87$; $SD = 1.66$), $t(201) = 7.48$, $p < .001$. However, when it comes to the use of emoji in communications about products, participants reported it as inappropriate ($M = 2.54$; $SD = 1.62$), $t(201) = -12.79$, $p < .001$ (t tests against scale midpoint: 4).

CHAPTER III

Discussion

Despite the popularity of emojis, few experimental research has been conducted in this field. Research focusing on the usage of emojis in communication processes of brands and in the consumer psychology and marketing contexts is particularly scarce.

The study aimed to explore the effects of the way in which a brand communicates (e.g., using emojis) and the type of communication (e.g., making the recall of a defective product) on the brand perception of customers and the brand personality that could arise.

A crisis is an event developed through complicated processes that causes damage and affects an entire organization. Product-harm crisis, related to defective or dangerous products, are an example of such events (Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al., 2009). Therefore, product-harm crisis can result in prejudice towards the corporate image of a brand, varying in terms of severity levels (e.g., Siomkos, 1999; Vassilikopoulou, Lepetsos, et al., 2009; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, et al., 2009). More specifically, perceived high severity tends to result in lower favorability towards a brand (Mowen & Ellis, 1981). Therefore, we expected that participants in the high severity condition would have a worse opinion about Electra. Following the suggestion of Lee (2004), we used a wider range of severity level variation (i.e., instead of using two similar levels of severity, such as high and extreme, we used low and high), which produced its effects: as expected, participants in the high severity condition reported lower favorability towards Electra, higher danger perceived and a lower intention of rebuying products from Electra. The perception of the information being trustworthy was also higher for participants in the high severity condition. Due to the high severity, a possibility would be participants incurring in systematic processing of the information contained in the press release. If that was the case, participants would mobilize more cognitive resources (Chen & Chaiken, 1999), which would allow for a better understanding of the message content and higher levels of trust (Griffin, Neuwirth, Giese, & Dunwoody, 2002), making a more stable judgment of the information provided. However, all the participants reported an overall perception of the message being trustworthy and objective.

It is also important to note the level of CSR perceived by consumers following the product-recall communication issued by Electra. As noted, incurring in an effort to resolve a product-harm crisis, by recalling the defective product, can be seen as behaving in socially responsible ways (Cheah, et al., 2007; Waddock & Smith, 2001). Our results corroborate this idea. As Electra was a fictional brand, along with the presented scenario, participants had little information to constitute a stable perception of Electra regarding CSR levels. Therefore,

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

the findings that the brand is perceived as highly social responsible are based on participants' interpretation of the press-release. Because of this, it can be assumed that the recall of a defective product, offering a solution free of charge (i.e., super-effort type), induced high levels of CSR on participants. Congruently, overall, participants also reported higher intentions of rebuying products. This is in line with the suggestion of Siomkos and Kurzbard (1994), that the negative impact of a product-harm crisis can be attenuated if a brand incurs in a super effort recall and is perceived as socially responsible.

Moreover, communicating a product recall can be seen as efforts towards responsibility and accountability (Cheah, et al., 2007). Given that this type of response to a product-harm crisis can be related to showing concern with customers' welfare (Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994), we expected the possibility of participants seeing Electra as having a responsible brand personality trait. Indeed, the overall opinion of participants (independently of their experimental condition) was that Electra acted as a responsible brand, being that especially evident for those in the low severity condition. This is in line with the conclusions above: the scenario and behavior of Electra conveyed a perception of the brand as responsible (in terms of personality and social responsibility).

To sum, regarding severity, as expected, overall, the manipulation was verified and severity had significant impacts on the perception of Electra, being it in terms of brand perception or brand personality associations. However, although the manipulation check reported the manipulation of emoji as being of relevance, the impact was not as strong as we expected.

The literature suggests that emojis contribute with positivity to messages in which they are used (Novak, et al., 2015; Riordan, 2017). Therefore, we expected that including a smiling emoji in a press release communicating a voluntary callback of a defective product, would also convey such positivity. We expected this positivity to impact brand evaluations. However, no significant direct effects of emoji were reported. It could have been relevant to include a direct variable evaluating the valence of the press release, to assess an overall perception. In any case, a possible explanation could be the extension of the press release. In order to convey realistic scenario, the press release was adapted from a real one. Therefore, it included details such as the date in which the defective product was sold; the serial number of the allegedly defective products, along with a graphical representation of the machine and the place where that number would be registered; the procedures to be taken if the consumer owned a defective product; and the defect and its consequences. The overall perception of participants was that the press release was trustworthy and objective, which is in line with its

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

level of detail. With such an extensive description, it could be the case that participants had difficulties in detecting the presence of the emoji, despite the fact that the emoji was included in the farewell message and was the last piece of information presented. The size of the emoji (same size of the letters) may also have influenced in the detection and/or importance attributed to it. However, our results suggest that it was not the case, given that the participants' recall of the emoji presence (i.e., manipulation check) demonstrated that the manipulation worked. Assuming that the presence of emoji was detected, the absence of impact on brand perception and brand personality may be due to other motives. A reason for the low impact of the emoji could be related to the findings of Derks, Bos and Grumbkow (2008), that suggest that while communicating through CMC, the verbal part of a message seems to have more impact than the non-verbal part. If that was the case, participants could have seen the emoji as a less important source of information. Another explanation, could be the level of negativity of the message making the emoji irrelevant: since consumers may assign greater weight to negative information (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991) (i.e., the content of the press release) when making evaluative judgements than on positive information (i.e., the emoji), the negative content of the message could have assumed higher relevance. Therefore, we can conclude that emojis exerted no direct effects on brand perception or brand personality.

Likewise, since incurring in irreverent advertising and using informal/cool language is a way of conveying an exciting and active personality towards a brand (Aaker, et al., 2004), and emojis are able to induce emotions like excitement (Kelly & Watts, 2015), we expected participants in the condition with emoji to see Electra as a brand characterized by the active personality trait. However, no direct effect of emoji was observed on the way participants rated brand personality. Overall, the perception of our participants was that Electra was an active brand, despite the condition. Therefore, it appears that the emoji, by itself, was not the reason for this perception, as there were no significant differences between participants who were exposed (or not) to the emoji. Being Electra a fictional brand and the emoji the sole stimuli present capable of conveying the idea of excitement, youthfulness and activity, participants may have lacked the elements to make personality inferences related to the emoji. Therefore, the overall perception that active brand personality trait was characteristic of the brand, may have resulted from the elements presented in the general description of the brand, in which we stated that innovation seeking and high levels of monetary investment in research and development of new products were core values of Electra.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Emojis convey playful interactions. Therefore, there is evidence that emojis not always facilitate social interactions, especially in formal contexts (e.g., Glikson et al., 2017). Thus, when discussing sensitive topics, the presence of features related to playfulness, like an emoji, may detract from this goal (Kelly & Watts, 2015). Therefore, we expected an interaction between presence of emoji and the severity of the defect, such that the positive impact of using emojis would be pronounced in the low severity condition. In fact, the scenario used for the high severity condition described such a potentially dangerous malfunction (e.g., short circuit), that lead us to assume that using emojis would have a lower impact on brand evaluations or no effect at all.

Indeed, we found that there is an impact of emoji, in the low gravity condition, but in the opposite direction. Unexpectedly, our results show a detrimental effect of emoji in the low severity conditions for different variables. For example, participants reported a higher confidence about their opinion of the brand when the emoji was absent. Therefore, instead of helping to understand the message (Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008; Lo, 2008), the presence of the emoji seems to be making it harder for participants to understand and properly judge the content of the message. The presence of an emoji also reduced the willingness to buy another Electra product. Moreover, when participants were asked to take the perspective of the consumer, the presence of the emoji in the press release actually made participants feel more worried about the defect, than those without emoji. Therefore, whenever we observed an interaction between severity and emoji presence, the same pattern emerged: the presence of the emoji negatively impacted participant's ratings, when the scenario described a low severity product-harm crisis. It can be the case that, even when the situation is of low severity, it is seen as inappropriate to use an emoji while communicating about a sensitive topic. A possible explanation could be the context in which the emoji is being used, as a product-harm crisis is a moment of sharing negative information about a company and a product (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000), in which brands try to diminish negativity levels (e.g., Jolly & Mowen, 1985). Using an emoji can be seen as inappropriate due to the circumstances, due to the playful emotion induced (Kelly & Watts, 2015; Riordan, 2017), with the adverse context preventing the positive effects an emoji usually has on messages. This is also in line with research of Rodrigues, Lopes and colleagues (2017), that reported participants with negative attitudes towards the use of emojis when discussing serious issues. Glikson and colleagues (2017), also found negative effects of using smileys (i.e., emojis) in formal settings, being that usage perceived as inappropriate. Therefore, despite the lower gravity, the context may have not been suitable for emojis. In the case of high severity, it could be of relevance for future

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

research to analyze if the level of negativity and/or severity could elicit different levels of information processing. According to Park and Nicolau (2015), negative reviews can be more attention grabbing and more influential. Therefore, one could suggest that, if a higher level of severity could induce a systematic processing of information, participants would make a judgment relying on the content of the message (Chen & Chaiken, 1999), if the emoji was understood as a simple nonverbal cue. In that case, it would make sense that participants in the high severity condition would not rely on the emoji as a relevant information source to form an impression. Therefore, future research could seek to manipulate and evaluate different types of information processing.

Interestingly, however, is the fact that these results are in line with the attitudes reported by participants regarding the usage of emojis in marketing communication. Indeed, participants reported that the usage of emojis when communicating about a product was inappropriate. Therefore, the negative effects of using emojis may be related both to the context of communicating during a crisis and about a product. These results are relevant due to its practical implications for brands and marketers, as individuals appear to rely on emojis solely on the context of social media, rejecting its usage on other contexts, such as when a brand is providing relevant information about a product. Because of this, when using emojis, marketers, community managers and social media managers should take into account if the context of communication is appropriate for the use of emojis, along with the thematic being communicated. Likewise, the way brands have been using emojis (e.g., creating brand keyboards with custom emojis, providing emojis to complement pictures in social media platforms) seems to be in accordance with this line of reasoning, as brands have been using emojis to indirectly create awareness of the brand and its products, instead of directly associating emojis to communication regarding a product. It is, then, important to note the unlikability of participants about emojis being used in communication regarding products. As already highlighted, the current work has limitations that should be taken into account. The main purpose of this research was to assess the effects of emojis in communication processes, especially those between brands and consumers. However, the fictional scenario had a great investment in detail explaining the product-harm crisis situation and in the manipulation of severity levels, which may have resulted in making the presence of the emoji subsidiary. This was especially felt in the case of high severity conditions. Therefore, in order to elicit a positive outcome from the use of emojis on that context, future research could test if the higher salience of emoji presence (e.g., bigger than the text) would have different effects. It can also be relevant to replicate this experiment using a neutral scenario (instead of one

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

describing a low or high severity crisis), or in a different context, such as a review the disclosure of a new product. This would allow to better assess if the negative impact of the emoji on brand perception and brand personality was related to the communication regarding products or if it was an effect of the implicit negativity of product-harm crisis scenarios. Future research regarding this subject should also seek to use a shorter message and/or a bigger emoji image, so that the presence of the emoji is more salient. The usage of different emojis, with higher levels of emotionality associated, can also be of interest. Including a measure assessing the valence of the press release could also have been important, since past research suggested emojis as having positive impacts on the valence of messages (e.g., Derks, Bos, & Grumbkow, 2008).

Likewise, because a company's reputation is an important factor (i.e., well-known companies with positive image suffer minor impacts, while less known companies can suffer greater impacts, Jolly & Mowen, 1985; Siomkos, 1989; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Siomkos & Shrivastava, 1993), it can be of relevance to manipulate familiarity levels towards a brand. It can also be relevant to evaluate if the usage of emojis is related to the expectancies that a consumer has regarding a specific brand (e.g., it can be positive when cool and more informal brands rely on emojis to communicate, but inadequate when a more serious and corporate brand do so).

We aimed to explore the relationship between the usage of emojis in a context of a product-harm crisis on brand personality and general brand perception. The simple fact that a brand makes a product recall, seems to induce in participants the general perception that it is acting in socially responsible ways, which is in line with previous research. Moreover, our results are also interesting as they are in line with the suggestion of Kelly and Watts (2015) that using emojis on specific environments may not be suitable. We also found that the perceptions of participants, contrary to what is usually believed, were worse when the emoji was presented, being the effect a lower favorability towards Electra. Likewise, instead of always providing nonverbal cues that supposedly served the purpose of helping the recipient of a message better understand it (Derks, et al., 2008; Lo, 2008), the emoji did not facilitate in this manner. Instead, it produced the opposite effects, which is partially in line with the findings of Glikson and colleagues (2017). Their findings, and ours, suggest that not all contexts are adequate for the usage of emojis.

Conclusion

To sum, we believe the experimental nature of this study, along with all the variables studied in it, bring some novelty and shed some light in a (still) unexplored area of research. It is also our belief that this research contributed significantly to the growing research regarding CMC and the usage of emojis. More, to our knowledge, there is few research relating the usage of emojis and brand evaluations in the field of consumer psychology, marketing and communication in general. As such, although we were not able to determine unequivocally the impact of using emojis, the study provides some important notes for future research and marketing practitioners, as well as researchers, with the context in which an emoji is being used highlighted.

References

- Aaker, D. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California Management Review*, 38(3), 102–120. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165845>
- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of marketing research*, 34(3), 347-356.
- Aaker, J. (1999). The malleable self: the role of self-expression in persuasion. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36, 45–57.
- Aaker, D. A., & Biel, A. L. (1993). Brand equity and advertising: An overview. In David A. Aaker and Alexander L. Biel (Eds.), *Brand equity and advertising : advertising's role in building strong brands* (pp. 1–8). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aaker, J. L., & Fournier, S. (1995). A brand as a character, a partner and a person: Three perspectives on the question of brand personality. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 22(1), 391–395. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090561211260031>
- Aaker, J., Fournier, S., & Brasel, S. A. (2004). When good brands do bad. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1086/383419>
- Adrianson, L. (2001). Gender and computer-mediated communication: Group processes in problem solving. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 17(1), 71–94. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0747-5632\(00\)00033-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0747-5632(00)00033-9)
- Aggarwal, P., & McGill, A. L. (2007). Is that car smiling at me? Schema congruity as a basis for evaluating anthropomorphized products. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34(4), 468–479. <https://doi.org/10.1086/518544>
- Austin, J. R., Siguaw, J. A., & Mattila, A. S. (2003). A re-examination of the generalizability of the Aaker brand personality measurement framework. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 11(2), 77–92.
- Azoulay, A., & Kapferer, J.N. (2003). Do brand personality scales really measure brand personality?. *Journal of Brand Management*, 11(2), 143–155. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540162>
- Biel, A. (1993). Converting image into equity. In David A. Aaker and Alexander L. Biel (Eds.), *Brand equity and advertising : advertising's role in building strong brands* (pp. 67–82). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Brown, J., Broderick, A. J., & Lee, N.(2007). Word of mouth communication within online communities: Conceptualizing the online social network. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 21(3), 2–20. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir>
- Burgoon, J. K., Guerrero, L. K., & Floyd, K. (2016). *Nonverbal communication*. Routledge.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Cheah, E. T., Chan, W. L., & Chieng, C. L. L. (2007). The corporate social responsibility of pharmaceutical product recalls: An empirical examination of U.S. and U.K. markets. *Journal of Business Ethics, 76*(4), 427–449. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-9292-1>
- Chen, S., & Chaiken, S. (1999). The heuristic-systematic model in its broader context. In S. Chaiken and Y. Trope (Eds.), *Dual-process theories in Social Psychology* (pp. 73-96). New York: Guilford.
- Cho, S. (2006). *Interpersonal communication between brands and consumers: A self-presentation study of corporate blogs*. Paper presented at the New Media Conference, University of Minnesota.
- Cleeren, K., Dekimpe, M. G., & Helsen, K. (2008). Weathering product-harm crises. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36*(2), 262–270. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-007-0022-8>
- Coombs, W. T. (1998). An analytic framework for crisis situations: Better responses from a better understanding of the situation. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 10*(3), 177–191. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjpr1003_02
- Dawar, N., & Pillutla, M. M. (2000). Impact of product-harm crises on brand equity: The moderating role of consumer expectations. *Journal of Marketing Research, 37*(2), 215–226. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.37.2.215.18729>
- Derks, D., Bos, A. E. R., & von Grumbkow, J. (2008). Emoticons in computer-mediated communication: Social motives and social context. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 11*(1), 99–101. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.2007.9926>
- Derks, D., Fischer, A. H., & Bos, A. E. R. (2008). The role of emotion in computer-mediated communication: A review. *Computers in Human Behavior, 24*(3), 766–785. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2007.04.004>
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2010). Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of CSR communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 12*(1), 8–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00276.x>
- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 13*(3), 339–348.
- Fletcher, G. J. O., Simpson, J. A., Thomas, G., & Giles, L. (1999). Ideals in intimate relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76*(1), 72–89. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.76.1.72>
- Folkes, V. S. (1984). Consumer reactions to product failure: An attributional approach. *Journal of Consumer Research, 10*(4), 398–409. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208978>
- Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 24*(4), 343–371.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Freling, T. H., & Forbes, L. P. (2005). An empirical analysis of the brand personality effect. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 14(7), 404–413.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/10610420510633350>
- Geuens, M., Weijters, B., & De Wulf, K. (2009). A new measure of brand personality. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 26(2), 97–107.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2008.12.002>
- Glikson, E., Cheshin, A., & van Kleef, G. A. (2017). The Dark Side of a Smiley. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 194855061772026.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617720269>
- Gottke, J. (2017, January 24). *Instagram Emoji Study – Emojis lead to higher interactions..* Retrieved from <https://www.quintly.com/blog/2017/01/instagram-emoji-study-higher-interactions/>
- Greenberg, J. (2016, April 25). The future of advertising is... 'Broad City' emoji?. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/2016/04/future-advertising-kim-kardashian-emoji/>
- Griffin, R. J., Neuwirth, K., Giese, J., & Dunwoody, S. (2002). Linking the heuristic-systematic model and depth of processing. *Communication Research*, 29(6), 705-732.
- Jolly, D. W., & Mowen, J. C. (1985). Product recall communications: The effects of source, Media, and social responsibility information. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 12(1), 471-475.
- Johnson, L. (2016, August 15). Twitter is now letting brands sponsor its emoji-like stickers. *Adweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.adweek.com/digital/twitter-now-letting-brands-sponsor-its-emoji-stickers-172964/>
- Kaye, L. K., Wall, H. J., & Malone, S. A. (2016). “Turn that frown upside-down”: A contextual account of emoticon usage on different virtual platforms. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 60, 463–467. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.02.088>
- Kelly, R., & Watts, L. (2015). *Characterising the inventive appropriation of emoji as relationally meaningful in mediated close personal relationships*. Poster session presented at Experiences of Technology Appropriation: Unanticipated Users, Usage, Circumstances, and Design, Oslo, Norway.
- Kiesler, S., Siegel, J., & McGuire, T. W. (1984). Social psychological aspects of computer-mediated communication. *American Psychologist*, 39(10), 1123–1134.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.39.10.1123>
- Klein, J., & Dawar, N. (2004). Corporate social responsibility and consumers' attributions and brand evaluations in a product-harm crisis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 21(3), 203–217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2003.12.003>
- Knapp, M. L., & Daly, J. A. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of interpersonal communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Knapp, M. L., Hall, J. A., & Horgan, T. G. (2013). *Nonverbal communication in human interaction*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Kraut, R., Mukhopadhyay, T., Szczypula, J., Kiesler, S., & Scherlis, W. (1999). Information and Communication: Alternative Uses of the Internet in Households. *Information Systems Research*, 10(4), 287–303. <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.10.4.287>
- Kwon, E. S., & Sung, Y. (2011). Follow Me ! Global Marketers ' Twitter Use. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 12(1), 4–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2011.10722187>
- Laufer, D., Gillespie, K., McBride, B., & Gonzalez, S. (2005). The role of severity in consumer attributions of blame: Defensive attributions in product-harm crises in Mexico. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 17(2-3), 33-50.
- Lee, B. K. (2004). Audience-Oriented Approach to Crisis Communication:. *Communication Research*, 31(5), 600–618. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650204267936>
- Lo, S.K. (2008). The Nonverbal Communication Functions of Emoticons in Computer-Mediated Communication. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 11(5), 595–597. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.2007.0132>
- Luo, S., 2014. Effects of texting on satisfaction in romantic relationships: The role of attachment. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 33, 145–152. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.01.014>.
- Maehle, N., Otnes, C., & Supphellen, M. (2011). Consumers' perceptions of the dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 10(5), 290-303.
- Manganari, E. E., & Dimara, E. (2017). Enhancing the impact of online hotel reviews through the use of emoticons. *Behaviour and Information Technology*, 36(7), 674–686. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2016.1275807>
- Marques, R., O. (2013, September 9). WTF, a nova marca da Optimus. *Meios&Publicidade*. Retrieved from <http://www.meiosepublicidade.pt/2013/09/wtf-a-nova-marca-da-optimus/>
- McWilliams, A. & Siegel, D. (2001).Corporate social responsibility: a theory of the firm perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), 117-27.
- McWilliams, A., & Siegel, D. (2000). Corporate social responsibility and financial performance: correlation or misspecification?. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(5), 603-609.
- Mowen, J. C., Jolly, D., & Nickell, G. S. (1981). Factors influencing consumer responses to product recalls: a regression analysis approach. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 8(1), 405-407.
- Mowen, J.C., & Ellis, H.W. (1981). The product defect: management and consumer implications. *The Annual Review of Marketing*, 158–172.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Neff, J. (2015). Dove launches curly-haired emojis to end straight-hair dominance. *Advertising Age*. Retrieved from <http://adage.com/article/digital/dove-launches-curly-haired-emojis-address-void/301203/>
- Novak, P. K., Smailović, J., Sluban, B., & Mozetič, I. (2015). Sentiment of emojis. *PLoS ONE*, *10*(12), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0144296>
- Nudd, T. (2016, May 4). Pepsi's emoji billboards and Instagram photos are cool in ways that the TV isn't. *Adweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.adweek.com/creativity/pepsis-emoji-billboards-and-instagram-photos-are-cool-ways-tv-isnt-171266/>
- Park, S., & Nicolau, J. L. (2015). Asymmetric effects of online consumer reviews. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *50*, 67-83.
- Pavalanathan, U., & Eisenstein, J. (2016). Emoticons vs. Emojis on Twitter: A Causal Inference Approach. In *Proceedings of AAAI Spring Symposium on Observational Studies through Social Media and Other Human-Generated Content*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-47880-7>
- Perry, M. S., & Werner-Wilson, R. J. (2011). Couples and computer-mediated communication: A closer look at the affordances and use of the channel. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, *40*(2), 120–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1552-3934.2011.02099.x>
- Pittman, M., & Reich, B. (2016). Social media and loneliness: Why an Instagram picture may be worth more than a thousand Twitter words. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *62*, 155–167. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.084>
- Rezabek, L. L., & Cochenour, J. J. (1998). Visual cues in computer-mediated communication: Supplementing text with emoticons. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, *18*(2), 201–215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23796529.1998.11674539>
- Riordan, M. A. (2017). Emojis as tools for emotion work: Communicating affect in text messages. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *36*(5), 549-567. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X17704238>
- Rodrigues, D., Lopes, D., Prada, M., Thompson, D., & Garrido, M. V. (2017). A frown emoji can be worth a thousand words: Perceptions of emoji use in text messages exchanged between romantic partners. *Telematics and Informatics*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2017.07.001>
- Rodrigues, D., Prada, M., Gaspar, R., Garrido, M. V., & Lopes, D. (2017). Lisbon Emoji and Emoticon Database (LEED): Norms for emoji and emoticons in seven evaluative dimensions. *Behavior Research Methods*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-017-0878-6>
- Sakoui, A. (2016, June 29). Ikea recalls 29 million dressers after six children's deaths. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-06-28/ikea-recalls-29-million-dressers-chests-after-six-child-deaths>

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Sen, S., & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2), 225–243. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.38.2.225.18838>
- Siomkos, G. (1989). Managing product-harm crises. *Industrial Crisis Quarterly*, 3(1), 41-60.
- Siomkos, G. J. (1999). On achieving exoneration after a product safety industrial crisis. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 14(1), 17-29.
- Siomkos, G. J., & Kurzbard, G. (1994). The Hidden Crisis in Product-harm Crisis Management. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(2), 30–41. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569410055265>
- Siomkos, G., & Shrivastava, P. (1993). Responding to product liability crises. *Long Range Planning*, 26(5), 72-79.
- Sirgy, J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behavior: a critical review. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(3), 287-300.
- Skovholt, K., Gronning, A., & Kankaanranta, A. (2014). The communicative functions of emoticons in workplace e-mails: :-). *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19(4), 780–797. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12063>
- Stieglitz, S., & Dang-Xuan, L. (2013). Emotions and Information Diffusion in Social Media — Sentiment of Microblogs and Sharing Behavior. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 29(4), 217–247. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MIS0742-1222290408>
- Stockton, N. (2015, December 22). Volkswagen's Emissions Scandal. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/2015/12/volkswagens-emissions-scandal/>
- Sugiyama, A. (2015). Kawaii meiru and Maroyaka neko: Mobile emoji for relationship maintenance and aesthetic expressions among Japanese teens. *First Monday*, 20(10). Retrieved from <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5826/4997>
- Sung, Y., & Kim, J. (2010). Consumer Perceptions of Online Shopping Environments. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(6), 461–469. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar>
- Sung, Y., Kim, Y., Kwon, O., & Moon, J. (2010). An Explorative Study of Korean Consumer Participation in Virtual Brand Communities in Social Network Sites. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 23(5), 430–445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2010.521115>
- Swaminathan, V., Stilley, K. M., & Ahluwalia, R. (2009). When Brand Personality Matters: The Moderating Role of Attachment Styles. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(6), 985–1002. <https://doi.org/10.1086/593948>
- Vassilikopoulou, A., Lepetsos, A., Siomkos, G., & Chatzipanagiotou, K. (2009). The importance of factors influencing product-harm crisis management across different crisis extent levels: A conjoint analysis. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 17(1), 65–74. <https://doi.org/10.1057/jt.2008.30>

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

- Vassilikopoulou, A., Siomkos, G., Chatzipanagiotou, K., & Pantouvakis, A. (2009). Product-harm crisis management: Time heals all wounds?. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 16(3), 174–180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2008.11.011>
- Waddock, S., & Smith, N. (2000). Corporate responsibility audits: Doing well by doing good. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 41(2), 75.
- Walsh, G., & Beatty, S. E. (2007). Customer-based corporate reputation of a service firm: Scale development and validation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 35(1), 127–143. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-007-0015-7>
- Walther, J. (2011). Theories of computer-mediated communication and interpersonal relations. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *The Handbook of Interpersonal Communication* (pp 443-479). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Walther, J. B., & D'Addario, K. P. (2001). The Impacts of Emoticons on Message Interpretation in Computer-Mediated Communication. *Social Science Computer Review*, 19(3), 324–347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089443930101900307>
- Weiner, B. (1980). *Human motivation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Weissman, Benjamin & Darren Tanner (March 2017). *ERP brain responses to emoji-generated irony*. Poster presented at the 2017 Cognitive Neuroscience Society Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- Wohl, J. (2016, August 16). How marketers can win the great emoji arms race. *Advertising Age*. Retrieved from <http://adage.com/article/digital/marketers-emoji-arms-race/303361/>

Appendix A – Study Survey



Este estudo insere-se no âmbito da psicologia do consumo. A sua participação é muito importante, por permitir compreender melhor a relação das marcas com os seus consumidores. Especificamente, iremos apresentar-lhe uma marca e de seguida faremos algumas questões acerca da sua percepção face à mesma.

É importante que leia com atenção toda a informação e que responda de acordo com a sua opinião, não existindo respostas certas ou erradas.

Obrigada desde já pela sua colaboração!

A sua participação tem um carácter voluntário. Por motivos éticos, o participante tem a possibilidade de negar a participação ou de se retirar do estudo a qualquer momento, bastando para isso fechar esta página de navegação. De acordo com as normas da comissão de Protecção de Dados, os dados recolhidos são anónimos e a sua eventual publicação só poderá ter lugar em revistas da especialidade. Pedimos-lhe que responda a este questionário de uma só vez, evitando interrupções. O tempo estimado para completar esta tarefa é de cerca de 7 minutos.

Tendo tomado conhecimento sobre a informação disponível acerca do estudo, declaro aceitar participar:

- Sim
 Não

>>

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!



Antes de começar, por favor responda a algumas questões sócio-demográficas:

Sexo

- Homem
- Mulher
- Outro (a)

Idade

Habilitações escolares

- Ensino Primário/Primeiro Ciclo
- Ensino Preparatório/Segundo Ciclo
- Ensino Unificado/Terceiro Ciclo
- Ensino Secundário
- Bacharelato/Licenciatura
- Mestrado
- Doutoramento

Ocupação

- Estudante
- Trabalhador por conta própria
- Trabalhador por conta de outrem
- Reformado



LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!



Por favor, leia atentamente o seguinte texto:

A Electra® é uma empresa que se pauta pela inovação, qualidade, performance e fiabilidade nos produtos que oferece aos seus clientes. A missão da Electra® é melhorar a qualidade de vida das pessoas com os seus produtos, através da disponibilização de uma vasta gama de produtos, permitindo assim que a maioria das pessoas consiga satisfazer as suas necessidades. A tecnologia de ponta e o crescimento sustentável são os dois principais pilares, garantindo que desenvolvem os seus produtos considerando o Agora e o Futuro.

Trabalhar na Electra® significa fazer parte de uma empresa líder na área dos electrodomésticos, presente em vários países por todo o mundo.

A Electra® investe cerca de 3 mil milhões de euros anualmente em investigação e desenvolvimento de produtos.



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)



Pedimos-lhe agora que pense na Electra® e no texto que leu sobre a marca.

A sua opinião acerca desta marca é:

Desfavorável



Favorável



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)



De seguida pedimos-lhe que leia com atenção um comunicado oficial da Electra®



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

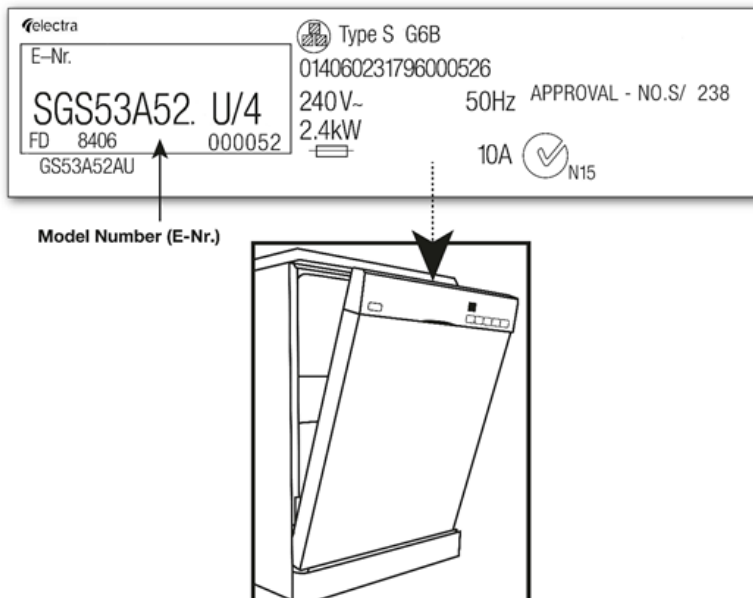


Na Electra® encaramos a qualidade dos nossos produtos e o apoio aos nossos clientes de forma muito séria.

Por isso, gostaríamos de o informar que, em alguns dos nossos modelos de máquinas de lavar loiça, descobrimos um defeito de qualidade num dos componentes. Isso pode levar a um curto-circuito e a um mau funcionamento, algo que consideramos não estar em conformidade com os nossos padrões de qualidade.

Se adquiriu uma máquina de lavar loiça nas nossas lojas em 2014 ou 2015, pedimos-lhe que verifique o número de artigo e o carimbo de data na sua máquina. Se a sua máquina for uma das afetadas, entre em contacto com o nosso Serviço de Assistência Electra® para agendar a recolha do equipamento. Este serviço é gratuito.

Veja como pode encontrar o número de artigo e o carimbo de data na sua máquina de lavar loiça:



Lista das máquinas de lavar loiça afetadas:
[1222425](#); [9222426](#); [8299360](#); [4027979](#); [0029383](#); [5299385](#).

Existe um elevado risco de segurança, pelo que não deve continuar a utilizar a sua máquina.

Esperamos continuar a contar com a sua preferência!

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Pedimos-lhe agora que pense na Electra® e no comunicado feito pela Marca.

A sua opinião acerca desta marca é:

Desfavorável							Favorável
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida está confiante acerca da sua opinião sobre a marca?

Pouco Confiante						Muito confiante
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida considera perigoso utilizar a máquina de lavar a loiça:

Pouco perigoso						Muito perigoso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida considera que a Electra® foi socialmente responsável?

Pouco responsável						Muito responsável
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Com base na informação apresentada no comunicado, em que medida compraria outros produtos da Electra®?

Certamente que não compraria						Certamente que compraria
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida a Electra® é responsável pelo defeito do produto?

Certamente que não é responsável						Certamente que é responsável
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida a informação apresentada no comunicado é objetiva?

Pouco objetiva						Muito objetiva
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Em que medida a informação apresentada no comunicado é de confiança?

Pouco confiável						Muito confiável
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Na sua opinião, este comunicado emitido pela Electra® é:

Negativo						Positivo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!



Imagine agora que tinha comprado uma máquina de lavar loiça identificada no comunicado da Electra®

Quão incomodado ficaria com a situação?

Nada incomodado Muito incomodado

Quão grave consideraria ser a falha técnica?

Pouco grave Muito grave

Agendaria a recolha do equipamento?

Certamente que não Certamente que sim



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!



Pense agora na Electra® e responda às seguintes questões.

Até que ponto considera os traços que se seguem característicos desta marca?

	Nada característico					Muito característico	
Despretensiosa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Estável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ativa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dinâmica	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inovadora	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agressiva	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ousada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Simple	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Romântica	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sentimental	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

>>

Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)



Por favor, recorde agora o comunicado da Electra® a pedir a recolha do equipamento.

A mensagem incluía algum emoji (i.e., figura colorida que representa uma face)?

Certamente não incluía Certamente incluía




>>

Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!



Dos emoji abaixo apresentados, por favor assinale qual pensa ter sido incluído na mensagem?

Em que medida a presença do Emoji influenciou a sua opinião face à marca?

Não influenciou Influenciou muito

Atualmente, são muitas as marcas que recorrem a Emojis na comunicação com os consumidores.

Um dos emojis mais utilizados é 😊.

Em que medida considera adequada essa utilização deste emoji nos seguintes cenários:

	Nada Adequado					Muito Adequado
... em posts publicitários nas redes sociais (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... em resposta direta ao comentário de um consumidor nas redes sociais	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... em comunicados de divulgação de novos produtos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... em comunicados de recolha de produtos defeituosos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)



Agradecemos muito a sua participação!

Em caso de necessidade de algum esclarecimento, pode contactar-nos via e-mail (bmpco1@iscte.pt).



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Appendix B – Brand Personality Scale

Brand personality measure (1 = *not characteristic for the brand at all* to 7 = *very characteristic for the brand*; Geuens, Weijters, & Wulf, 2009)

- 1) Down-to-earth;
- 2) Stable;
- 3) Responsible;
- 4) Active;
- 5) Dynamic;
- 6) Innovative;
- 7) Aggressive;
- 8) Bold;
- 9) Ordinary;
- 10) Simple;
- 11) Romantic;
- 12) Sentimental.

Portuguese translation of the Brand personality measure (1 = *Nada característico* to 7 = *Muito característico*; adapted from Geuens, Weijters, & Wulf, 2009)

- 1) Despretensiosa;
- 2) Estável;
- 3) Responsável;
- 4) Activa;
- 5) Dinâmica;
- 6) Inovadora;
- 7) Agressiva;
- 8) Ousada;
- 9) Comum;
- 10) Simples;
- 11) Romântica;
- 12) Sentimental.

Appendix C - Effect of conditions on Brand Perception

	Direct Effects		Interaction Effects
	Severity	Emoji	Severity * Emoji
1.How favourable is your perception of Electra	$F(1,198) = 7.51, p = .007$	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 1.06, p = .306$
2. (...) are you confident about your own opinion of the brand	$F(1,198) = 2.86, p = .092$	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 4.48, p = .036$
3. (...) is it dangerous to use the washing dishwashing machine	$F(1,198)=116.11, p < .001$	$F(1,198) = 1.04, p = .308$	$F < 1$
4. (...) was Electra was socially responsible	$F < 1$	$F < 1$	$F < 1$
5.Would you buy other products from Electra	$F(1,198) = 5.59, p = .019$	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 8.83, p = .003$
6. (...) is Electra responsible for the defect of the product	$F < 1$	$F < 1$	$F < 1$
7. (...) was the information presented in the press release objective	$F < 1$	$F < 1$	$F < 1$
8. (...) was the information presented in the press release trustworthy	$F(1,198) = 3.97, p = .048$	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 3.82, p = .052$

Appendix D - Effect of conditions on Brand Personality

	Direct Effects		Interaction Effects
	Severity	Emoji	Severity * Emoji
Responsibility	$F(1,198) = 4.64, p = .033$	$F(1,198) = 1.38, p = .242$	$F < 1$
Activity	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 1.73, p = .190$	$F < 1$
Aggressiveness	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 1.12, p = .290$	$F < 1$
Simplicity	$F(1,198) = 1.15, p = .285$	$F < 1$	$F < 1$
Emotionality	$F(1,198) = 2.08, p = .151$	$F(1,198) = 2.98, p = .086$	$F(1,198) = 1.48, p = .226$
Responsibility	$F(1,198) = 4.64, p = .033$	$F(1,198) = 1.38, p = .242$	$F < 1$
Activity	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 1.73, p = .190$	$F < 1$
Aggressiveness	$F < 1$	$F(1,198) = 1.12, p = .290$	$F < 1$

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Appendix E – Factor Analysis

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2,107	52,679	52,679	2,107	52,679	52,679	1,679	41,973	41,973
2	1,001	25,036	77,715	1,001	25,036	77,715	1,430	35,741	77,715
3	,530	13,247	90,962						
4	,362	9,038	100,000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

LET'S PUT A SMILE...ON THAT BRAND!

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
Atualmente, são muitas as marcas que recorrem a Emojis na comunicação com os consumidores. Um do...-... em posts publicitários nas redes sociais (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	,022	,898
Atualmente, são muitas as marcas que recorrem a Emojis na comunicação com os consumidores. Um do...-... em resposta direta ao comentário de um consumidor nas redes sociais	,331	,758
Atualmente, são muitas as marcas que recorrem a Emojis na comunicação com os consumidores. Um do...-... em comunicados de divulgação de novos produtos	,872	,193
Atualmente, são muitas as marcas que recorrem a Emojis na comunicação com os consumidores. Um do...-... em comunicados de recolha de produtos defeituosos	,899	,111

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.^a

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.