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User-generated content behaviour of the dissatisfied service customer

Structured Abstract

Purpose
This study focuses on the motivation of service customers to create user-generated content (UGC) after a negative service experience. In examining this relationship, the moderating role of "extraversion" personality trait is also taken into consideration. Furthermore, the paper examines how differently motivated service customers react to a firm's service recovery strategies, whilst, insights into the relationship between UGC creation and specific online platform usage are also provided.

Design/methodology/approach
We use SEM to test our conceptual model, based on an empirical dataset collected from an online survey research of 239 service customers. The dataset pertains to international travellers and their UGC behaviour after a negative travel experience.

Findings
Altruistic, vengeance and economic motivations are strong drivers for UGC creation after a negative service experience. Motivations also correlate to participation in specific online platforms. Furthermore, it is shown that highly extraverted customers create more UGC after a negative service experience when motivated by vengeance. Finally, higher levels of altruistic and self-enhancement motivations correlate with a positive attitude towards a firm's response, whereas customers who are motivated by vengeance have a negative attitude towards a firm's response.

Practical implications
Customers who share their negative service experience by creating UGC in social media, can be segmented according to their motivation. Service providers should inspect the UGC of their customers to understand the motivation behind it. The motivations to create UGC varies across platforms, and hence, customized service recovery strategies are required.

Originality/value
This paper examines UGC creation in relation to motivation, extraversion, and attitude towards a firm's response. This is the first reported application which collectively examines important issues like these in a unified theoretical framework.

Keywords: User-generated content, motivation, extraversion, social media, word-of-mouth, service recovery

Article Classification: Research paper

User-generated content behaviour of the dissatisfied service customer

1. Introduction

The web 2.0 interface encourages Internet users to produce user-generated content (UGC), which refers to any material created and uploaded to the Internet by non-media professionals, whether it is a comment posted on Amazon.com, a professional-quality video uploaded to YouTube, or a student's profile on Facebook (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2008). From a service customer's perspective, much of the UGC is directed at fellow Internet users, which include friends, family, fellow service customers and service providers, through personal communication and information exchange in a variety of online platforms (Sigala, 2008).

When the delivered service does not meet customers' expectations, service failure occurs which leads to dissatisfaction (Oliver, 1980). A dissatisfied service customer may choose to exit or to voice his/her dissatisfaction directly to the service provider or to others in the form of word of mouth (WOM) (Hirschman, 1970). The ubiquity of internet access through, for example, smart phones, enables customers to vocalise their dissatisfaction very quickly after a negative service experience. This poses specific challenges to the management of negative UGC.

The influence of WOM in services is well documented (Wangenheim and Bayon, 2004). WOM may help overcome the problem of intangibility of services by providing information from an experienced source (Bansal and Voyer, 2000) and may help shaping expectations of service (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2009). A view of the service encounter as a process, a sequence of events, during which the customer evaluates at each step (Dube and Morgan, 1990), brings about two aspects that highlight the importance of this study. First, during the service encounter there are many opportunities for failure (Bitner et al., 1990), and therefore, many opportunities for negative WOM. Second, exposure to WOM may occur during any stage of the service encounter. To give an example, it is not unusual to see on Facebook newsfeed pictures and comments of dishes taken by the guests while at the restaurant. Existing research on the effects of WOM during the service encounter has emphasized the fact that customer's judgment of the service quality and purchase intentions are highly driven by most recent WOM activities (Wang, 2011). Evidently, understanding negative WOM through UGC becomes an issue of major importance for service providers.

Current literature examined the impact of already created UGC on customers (see e.g., Parra-Lopéz et al., 2010; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009; Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Fewer studies focused on the antecedents of UGC creation (Daugherty et al., 2008; Párra-

Lopez et al., 2011; Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004; Yoo and Gretzel, 2008; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011) and, to the best of our knowledge, only two investigated the case of a solely negative service experience (i.e., Sparks and Browning, 2010; Zhen, Young and Kincaid, 2009). These two studies a) examine motivations, content, and structure of the complaint by focusing on only one specific consumer forum, b) implement qualitative research techniques and hence the generalizability of their results is questionable. From the preceding discussion, it becomes evident that the present study is of high value both from a theoretical and a managerial perspective.

How firms should respond to negative UGC is another challenging topic waiting for research. On the one hand, literature suggests that customer-to-customer conversations are increasingly viewed as part of the e-service quality delivery and should therefore be managed (Sigala, 2008), whilst, on the other hand, recent studies emphasize that negative feelings following hedonic consumption abate in time (Chang et al, 2013), making a prompt response of higher risk than a delayed one. Prior work on UGC in the services literature offers only general warnings in relation to negative UGC. For example, it tells us that a) negative UGC can cause brand equity dilution (Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2011) and b) negative UGC may decrease the desirability of purchasing a service by directly influencing customer's attitudes towards the service offering (Lee *et al.*, 2008; Ye *et al.*, 2011).

We expand on the previous very limited work on the issue by looking at a broader range of online platforms and at a wider range of motivations for complaining online. In addition, we investigate motivations for creating UGC after a negative service experience in relation to two factors: extraversion and attitudes towards service recovery strategies. First, the personality trait "extraversion" from the big-five personality traits originally proposed by Fiske (1949) helps explain more vocal customers, compared with the majority of online community participants who do not post ("lurkers"; Nonnecke and Preece, 2000). Second, the examination of service customer attitudes towards a firm's response after their negative UGC creation is of major importance as it can provide managerially purposeful insights.

Against this background, this paper focuses on an important and evolving area of research for which very little is currently known from existing literature. More specifically, this study aims to address several important objectives. First, to identify important motivators for UGC creation after a negative service experience. Second, to investigate the moderating role of extraversion. Third, to examine customers' attitudes towards service recovery responses as a result of a negative service experience. Fourth, to shed some light on the relationship between UGC creation and specific online platform usage. As we show in the

following sections, relevant literature in the area of social media is also very limited and fragmented. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first reported application which collectively examines all these important issues in a unified theoretical framework. Our proposed theoretical framework of the UGC creation after a negative service experience is tested within the context of tourism by using an empirical dataset pertaining to international travellers and their UGC behaviour after a negative travel experience.

The next section outlines the theoretical background and defines our research hypotheses. The third section is concerned with our measures and data collection methods. The fourth section presents our empirical results, whilst section five discusses our findings and provides implications for managers and researchers.

2. Literature review

2.1. Level of UGC creation

UGC is an important, "authentic" source of information for service providers (Benwell and Stokoe, 2007) and therefore should be monitored closely (Sparks and Browning, 2011). This research focuses on UGC creation after a negative service experience (i.e. the post-purchase phase), which is a critical moment for UGC proactive use. UGC creation includes both participation and production in UGC (Shao, 2009), rather than simply reading or watching user-generated sites. Participation involves user-to-user interaction and user-to-content interaction (e.g., commenting on status updates) in forums and ranking content websites. Production involves publishing own content, such as videos uploaded on YouTube, posts in blogs and personal home pages (Shao, 2009).

Many studies investigated the level of participation in UGC (e.g., Nonnecke and Preece, 2000; Shao, 2009; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011). In the service literature, the very few studies which focused on the antecedents of UGC and the consumers' motivation to participate in UGC did not focus on the case of a solely negative service experience (Daugherty et al., 2008; Párra-Lopez et al., 2011; Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004; Yoo and Gretzel, 2008; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011). The two studies we found which did so (i.e., Sparks and Browning, 2010; Zhen, Young and Kincaid, 2009) examine just a narrow range of motivations by focusing on only one specific consumer forum, and also, they both implement qualitative research techniques. Note that the level of UGC creation might differ depending

on the type of media (Yoo and Gretzel, 2011); for example, blogs denote a type of media in which production is often higher than in reviews (Shao, 2009).

This study addresses shortcomings of the existing literature by examining UGC creation of service customers on a variety of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, forums, TripAdvisor, blogs and YouTube, following a negative service experience.

2.2. Motivations to participate in UGC

Dissatisfied customers can communicate their dissatisfaction by engaging in WOM (Bougie, et al., 2003; Singh, 1990), this may also take place online (Gregoire, Laufer, Tripp, 2010; Zheng, Youn and Kincaid, 2009). Understanding customers' motivations to create UGC after a negative service experience is important for service providers to anticipate and avoid crises (La Nagard and de Campos Ribeiro, 2011). Literature has proposed a variety of motivations of customers to produce and/or participate in UGC (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wasko and Faraj, 2000; Yang and Lai, 2010; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011). However, examining these motivations from the perspective of why people create UGC after a negative service experience is an important topic which remains open. We introduce several of these motivations to the current study to investigate UGC creation that is negative or critical in content, and relates to a negative service experience.

2.2.1. Altruistic motivation

Altruism is a motivation based on wanting to help others. Social networks enable people to exchange information with many other people online. They may not know who is listening to them but they still contribute to the pull of knowledge (Smith and Kollock, 1999). Furthermore, because this information is transferred quickly and often remains on the Internet for a long time, a particular type of reciprocity occurs, called serial reciprocity (Ulrich, 1998). People, who have benefited from others' online sharing of information in the past, feel that they need to "repay that benefit" (Parra-López et al, 2010) by helping others, even if they do not know them. Therefore altruistic motivation includes both wanting to help others and wanting to do so because of having benefited from the contributions of others in the past (Parra-López et al, 2010; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011). Accordingly, service customers who have had a negative service experience may create UGC to help others or because they benefited

from others' UGC in the past may feel that they too must help. Therefore, we posit the following:

> **H1a:** Customers' altruistic motivation has a positive effect on their UGC creation after a negative service experience.

2.2.2. Vengeance motivation

Bechwati and Morrin (2003, p.996) define revenge and the desire for consumer vengeance as "the retaliatory feelings that consumers feel towards a firm, such as the desire to exert some harm on the firm, typically following an extremely negative purchase experience". Revenge, according to Zourrig et al. (2009), is a problem-focussed strategy, in which consumers find their solutions through revenge, which in turn releases the anger caused by the injustice. The Internet enables consumers to publicly complain with the intention to harm a company.. Research has increasingly discussed the perspectives of consumers who take revenge through the Internet (La Nagard and de Campos Ribeiro, 2011; Zourrig et al., 2009; Gregorie et al., 2010). Indirect revenge, such as public complaining online, was found not to be dependent on consumer perceived power vis-à-vis the firm unlike direct forms of revenge (e.g. marketplace aggression) (Gregorie et al. 2010), therefore making it a significant channel for the customers and a volatile one for the firms. As a result, we propose the following:

> **H1b:** Customers' vengeance motivation has a positive effect on their UGC creation after a negative service experience.

2.2.3. Venting negative feelings motivation

Venting involves expressing negative feelings or emotions, such as anger, which is among the most frequently articulated emotions after a negative experience (Sparks and Browning, 2010; Wetzer et al., 2007) and is closely related to the previously discussed vengeance motivation. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) describe venting negative feelings as an emotional release that helps reduce tension, frustration or anger. Venting is closely related to vengeance, but rather than seeking revenge, a consumer may simply want to express his or her negative feelings online to release frustration (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004) or to "blow off steam" (Bushman, 2002, p.724). In a similar way, venting is distinct from altruism. Although the

information shared may be helpful to others, venting is about an individual's desire to express their emotions as a means to be heard and release its own frustration; and does not necessarily imply a desire to help others, as is the case with altruism. Bougie et al (2003) found that anger leads to increased negative word-of-mouth. Therefore, we suggest the following:

> **H1c:** Customers' venting motivation has a positive effect on their UGC creation after a negative service experience.

2.2.4. Self-enhancement motivation

Self-enhancement takes many forms but is generally defined as having a constant positive and flattering view of oneself (Sedikides and Gregg, 2008). Self-enhancers perceive themselves as superior to others (Alicke et al., 1995), are likely to claim credit for success and disclaim responsibility for failures (Campbell and Sedikides, 1999) and believe that their fellow associates think of them in a positive light, though these associates might think differently (Shrauger and Schoeneman, 1979). Not surprisingly, self-enhancers have high self-esteem (Hepper et al., 2011) and may be recognized in social networks by their active participation and constant self-focussed status updates, blogs or comments, while seeking much attention from others. Creating consumption-related WOM allows them to gain attention, show connoisseurship and to be intelligent shoppers (Henning-Thurau et al, 2004). Therefore, we propose the following:

> **H1d:** Customers' self-enhancement motivation has a positive effect on their UGC creation after a negative service experience.

2.2.5. Economic motivation

Most economic or compensation motivations have been described as economic incentives (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Yoo and Gretzel, 2011), in which consumers write a good review or rate a product in return for a reward. When customers have a negative service experience, they may be motivated to create UGC in the form of a complaint on the organisation's website in the hope of gaining compensation for their negative experience. According to Baker et al. (2011), people who complain may also be opportunistic complainers. These types of complainers are customers who complain with the goal of

gaining a financial advantage from the company that has caused the service failure in their eyes. Therefore, we posit the following:

> **H1e:** Customers' economic motivation has a positive effect on their UGC creation after a negative service experience.

2.3. Extraversion

Westbrook (1987) suggests that positive and negative feelings linked to post-purchase product experiences create tension and encourage WOM. However, the extent to which a person communicates after a negative service experience may be related to his or her personality. Extraversion is one of the factors in the big-five factor model of personality (Fiske, 1949), and prior research has labelled extraverts as talkative and sociable (Yoo and Gretzel, 2011), goal oriented (Wang and Erdheim, 2007) and having larger social networks (Pollet et al., 2011). Correa et al. (2010) argue that extraversion is positively related to social media use.

Extraversion is a key personality trait to examine in relation to customers' motivation to create UGC after a negative service experience, because research suggests that only a small proportion of people create UGC (Nonnecke and Preece, 2000). That is, not all unhappy customers express themselves online. This may not be the case with extraverts, because extraverts are (1) more talkative and assertive (Goldberg, 1992) and (2) more interested in negotiating (Raymark et al., 1997).

Yoo and Gretzel, (2011) find that extraverted customers are more likely to want to help others. More than 60% of extraverted bloggers report that they knowingly contribute to a pool of information for people whom they have never met. In addition, Johnson et al. (1989) argue that those who are more extraverted are more talkative and therefore have greater opportunities to offer or receive help.

Research focussing on the relationship between extraversion and vengeance is lacking. However because extroverts are more goal-oriented (Wang and Erdheim, 2007), they might be more prone to seek revenge through UGC creation after a negative service experience.

Venting negative feelings involves expressing emotions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004); thus, this motivation is more likely to fit with customers who are extraverted. Yoo and

Gretzel (2011) find a correlation between venting and extraversion. According to their study, extraversion increases the likelihood of the need to vent.

Self-enhancers are shown to desire feedback (Hepper et al, 2011), tendencies observed both in interaction with acquaintances/strangers and close others (Hepper et al, 2011). Therefore, we expect that extrovert self-enhancers to create more UGC after the negative travel experience because extroverts are talkative, sociable (Yoo and Gretzel, 2011) and have larger social networks (Pollet et al., 2011).

Finally, as previously mentioned, consumers who are motivated by economic reasons may have strong financial greed, which might manifest outwards and assertively in a more extroverted person. Previous literature has found a positive significant relationship between assertiveness and extraversion (Ames and Flynn, 2007; Averret and McManis, 1997). Therefore, we posit the following:

H2a: In customers with high levels of extraversion, there will be a stronger relationship between altruistic motivation and UGC creation, than in customers with low levels of extraversion.

H2b: In customers with high levels of extraversion, there will be a stronger relationship between vengeance motivation and UGC creation, than in customers with low levels of extraversion.

H2c: In customers with high levels of extraversion, there will be a stronger relationship between venting motivation and UGC creation, than in customers with low levels of extraversion.

H2d: In customers with high levels of extraversion, there will be a stronger relationship between self-enhancement motivation and UGC creation, than in customers with low levels of extraversion.

H2e: In customers with high levels of extraversion, there will be a stronger relationship between economic motivation and UGC creation, than in customers with low levels of extraversion.

2.4. Attitude towards firm's response

Service recovery refers to "all the actions that an organisation may take to rectify a failure" (Andreassen, 2000, p.40). Successful service recovery may result in greater customer satisfaction than before the failure (service recovery paradox) (McCollough and Bharadwaj,

1992), while failure to recover successfully would lead to greater dissatisfaction (double deviation) (Binter et al, 1990). Service recovery actions also impact customer satisfaction, repurchase intention or WOM intentions (De Matos et al., 2009; Mazzarol et al., 2007). Relatively few studies, however, have investigated customers' attitudes towards service recovery responses *after* creating UGC as a result of a negative experience.

Several studies have looked at types that service recovery efforts can take (e.g. Andreassen, 2000) and a firm's apology and an explanation for the factors that might have caused the service failure are positively related to customer satisfaction (Liao, 2007). However, service recovery strategies, such as an apology, through online interfaces seem less effective than when done "offline" (Harris et al., 2006). Research has also shown that managerial responses to negative reviews on sites, such as TripAdvisor, positively impact on consumer attitudes (Litvin and Hoffman, 2012). Research shows growing numbers of these responses although they are still limited, since less than 4% of negative reviews have a management response (O'Connor, 2010). A recent study found that the firm's level of experience with social media is linked to the tendency not to react (Pantano and Corvello, 2013).

Furthermore, service recovery strategies may not satisfy all customer motivations given their different emotional intensity in spite of similar valence. Emotions generally can be classified as positive or negative (Bagozzi et al, 1999), although authors have also argued for the need to differentiate between negative emotions (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004). In a service-failure situation customers experience negative emotions (Menon and Dube, 2004; Smith and Bolton, 2002; Westbrook and Oliver, 1991; van Dolen et al, 2004; Varela-Neira et al, 2008; Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004), although the literature shows mixed results regarding whether this creates a negative bias towards evaluations. However, customers who experience more intense negative emotions are more likely to be less satisfied than those who experience little or no negative emotions. Westbrook and Oliver (1991) explain that "moderate negative affect is tolerated to some extent and its negative valence is not simply translated into dissatisfaction" (p.89). Menon and Dube (2004) further show that the intensity of negative emotions (anger and anxiety) has direct negative impact on provider response evaluation. Therefore, we expect that customers with an intense negative emotional motivation, such as vengeance or venting, for creating UGC after a negative service experience, will be less receptive to a firm's recovery effort. Thus, we propose the following:

H3a: Customers' altruistic motivation for creating UGC has a positive effect on their attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure.

H3b: Customers' vengeance motivation for creating UGC has a negative effect on their attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure.

H3c: Customers' venting motivation for creating UGC has a negative effect on their attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure.

H3d: Customers' self-enhancement motivation for creating UGC has a positive effect on their attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure.

H3e: Customers' economic motivation for creating UGC has a positive effect on their attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure.

Figure 1 displays the conceptual model.

_____Insert Figure 1 about here_____

3. Method

3.1. Setting and subjects

Our conceptual model and research hypotheses are tested within the context of tourism for several reasons. First, tourism services are often considered as high-involvement, high-perceived-risk purchases. Due to limited pre-purchase evaluation opportunities (Nysveen, 2003), consumers are increasingly going online to search for pre-purchase information. Second, a trip may comprise of many purchasing decisions and many "moments of truth" (Norman, 1991), e.g., at the hotel, an activity during the holiday, a dinner at a restaurant, etc. Therefore, the opportunities to spread negative WOM in the case of a service failure are multiple, and so are the occasions for pre-purchase information search. Consistent with previous studies in this area (e.g., Sparks and Browning, 2010; Zhen, Young and Kincaid, 2009), we define a negative travel experience as any controllable or uncontrollable factor that negatively influences a trip involving a service provider. Service providers include travel agents, accommodation providers, sightseeing organisations, and transportation service providers.

The sampling unit is international and consists of customers with Internet access, who had a negative travel experience. The questionnaire was distributed via multiple media

channels to reach the target population. Social media, including Facebook and Twitter, was used, whilst the survey was also posted on a Dutch travel forum named AllesAmerica.com. In addition, 80 door drops in the city of Leeds, UK were distributed, and the "mall intercept" method was undertaken at the train station and an international airport. In total, 266 questionnaires were collected; however, the control question showed that 27 respondents participated in the survey after a positive experience and therefore were discarded. This resulted in 239 usable questionnaires.

Our respondents were mainly recruited through Facebook and Twitter in order to ensure that they have used social media in the past, and thus, are eligible to complete our questionnaire. More specifically, approximately 45% of our respondents came through Facebook and 35% of them through Twitter. Many online travel forums refused the invitation to participate in our research, and thus, only approximately 5% of the questionnaires came through this channel. Finally, door drops and "mall intercept" methods were mainly used for fill-up purposes and accounted for 5% and 10% of the total sample respectively. Although we acknowledge the fact that two of our data collection methods were not equally represented in our sample (i.e., door drops, and "mall intercept"), this is not a serious limitation, taken into consideration the topic of our study which focuses on online UGC creation.

We recruited participants who varied across a total of 27 different nationalities, making our sample truly international: Dutch (31.8%), followed by German (23.8%), American (11.7%), English (7.9%), Indian (3.8%), Canadian (2.5%), Greek (1.7%), and 20 other nationalities (16.6%). In terms of demographic characteristics, 44.8% of the participants were females and 55.2% were males. The majority of respondents were of younger ages between 21 and 30 years old (71.1%) and of higher educational background (29.7% had a university degree and 35.1% had a post-graduate degree). In Table 1, some basic demographic characteristics of our sample are presented in a condensed form. Evidently, all age groups and educational backgrounds are adequately represented in our sample, considering the fact that younger people are the ones who are more likely to use social media and internet (see e.g., Koçak et al., 2012).

_____Insert Table 1 about here_____

3.2. Measures

Measures were based on previous research and appear in Table 2. All items were measured using five-point scales. We assessed two measures of UGC creation after a negative service experience: one item measured the perceived *increase* in UGC creation after a negative service experience, and the other measured the specific social media platform usage after the negative service experience for UGC creation. Each item specifically stated "after my negative travel experience" to remind the respondent of the specific nature of the experience linked to UGC creation of interest. Questionnaires were in English and then translated into German and Dutch. We pilot tested these with 12 native speakers to ensure clarity.

_____Insert Table 2 about here_____

4. Results

4.1. Measurement Results

All scales show a good level of internal consistency reliability based on the estimated cronbach's alpha values: α = .893 (altruism), α = .915 (vengeance), α = .814 (venting), α = .860 (self-enhancement), α = .955 (economic motivation), α = .745 (attitude towards firm response), and α = .886 (extraversion). A confirmatory factor analysis model of the constructs was also estimated using AMOS. The fit of the model was satisfactory: cmin/df = 1.884, CFI=0.92, RMSEA=0.06. In an attempt to examine the degree of validity and reliability of our scales, established measures were estimated, such as Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Squared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Squared Variance (ASV). As is shown in Table 3 the estimated CR values for all constructs are greater than the usual threshold of 0.7, suggesting that scales are reliable. Additionally, all estimated CR values are greater than the estimated AVE values for all constructs and all AVE values are greater than the usual threshold of 0.5. Evidently, the convergence validity of our scales is also established. Finally, the estimated MSV and ASV values for all constructs are lower than the estimated AVE values, suggesting that discriminant validity of our scales can be also established (see Hair et al., 2006; Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

_____Insert Table 3 about here_____

Furthermore, the factor correlation matrix with the square root of the AVE on the diagonal is also presented in Table 4. It is evident that the square root of the AVE for each construct is greater than the correlation between the construct and any other construct; a finding which provides further evidence of discriminant validity.

_____Insert Table 4 about here_____

4.2. The Structural Model

A full structural model using AMOS was run to test our hypotheses. We standardized the interaction terms to ensure unbiased parameter estimates and to mitigate potential multicollinearity. Table 5 shows the respective coefficients, t-values, and significance levels of the structural paths. The fit statistics (cmin/d.f.=1.027; NFI=0.98; CFI=0.99; RMSEA=0.011) suggest that the model represents a satisfactory fit to the data.

_____Insert Table 5 about here_____

Table 5 shows that H1a, H1b and H1e are supported by our data. More specifically, motivation of altruism is the strongest predictor of UGC creation (β=0.226, t=2.539, p<0.05), followed by vengeance (β=0.216, t=1.988, p<0.05) and economic motivation (β=0.170, t=1.929, p<0.1). H1c and H1d are not supported. Therefore, we can conclude that the more the customers are motivated by altruistic, vengeance and economic purposes, the more their UGC creation will be after a negative service experience.

Our results regarding the interaction moderating effects (i.e., the product terms, as suggested by Frazier et al., 2004) of H2a-H2e, suggest a significant, positive effect of Extraversion × Vengeance on UGC creation (β=0.204, t=1.816, p<0.1), in support of H2b. Therefore, extraversion moderates the relationship between service customers with a vengeance motivation and UGC creation. The respective interaction effect is presented in Figure 2 and shows that extraversion strengthens the positive relationship between vengeance motivation and UGC creation.

_____Insert Figure 2 about here_____

Furthermore, our results suggest a significant, negative effect of Extraversion × Altruism on UGC creation (β=-0.180, t=-2.083, p<0.05), which is in contrast with H2a. Therefore, although extraversion moderates the relationship between service customers with an altruistic motivation and UGC creation, the respective effect is not in the expected direction. As is shown in Figure 3, extraversion dampens the positive relationship between altruism and UGC creation. Finally, H2c, H2d and H2e are not supported by our data.

_____Insert Figure 3 about here_____

The results for H3a–H3e indicate that altruism explains attitude towards a firm's response the most (β=0.295, t=5.256, p<0.01), and hence, H3a is supported. Evidently, service customers who are motivated by altruism to create UGC are more likely to have a positive attitude towards a firm's response. Furthermore, in support of H3b, the results indicate that vengeance motivation has a significant, negative effect on attitude towards a firm's response (β=-0.211, t=-3.149, p<0.01). Obviously, customers who are motivated by vengeance are more likely to have negative attitudes towards a firm's response. Finally, our results show that those motivated by self-enhancement are also more likely to have positive attitudes towards a firm's response (β=0.110, t=2.089, p<0.05), in support of H3d. On the other hand, H3c and H3e are not supported by our data.

4.3. UGC creation by platform

Furthermore, regression models were estimated with the motivations as the independent variables and platform use as the dependent variable. We found that specific motivations lead to the preference of certain platforms over others. Table 6 shows the models, and all are significant at either the .01 or the .05 level. A higher altruistic motivation predicts a higher preference to create negative UGC in forums, blogs, on TripAdvisor, and company websites (all significant at p<.01). A higher venting motivation predicts a greater preference for social media platforms, particularly Twitter (p<.05), and Facebook (p<.1), and a lower preference for company websites (p<.1). A higher level of vengeance motivation predicts a different behaviour; that is, views are expressed on focussed-related travel review sites, such as TripAdvisor (p<.01). Vengeful respondents also express UGC on social media sites, such as Twitter (p<.05) and Facebook (p<.05), and on company websites (p<.05). Self-enhancers use

mostly Facebook (p<.05) and YouTube (p<.1). A high economic motivation predicts creation of UGC only on company websites (p<.01).

_____Insert Table 6 about here_____

4.4. Motivations and service recovery strategy effectiveness

In addition, we applied multiple regression analysis to explore which service recovery strategies, if any, are linked to specific motivations (see Table 7). All four models are statistically significant at 0.01 level. An analysis of Table 7 by row suggests that customers who are motivated by altruism are likely to react positively to any type of service recovery strategy (i.e., compensation, apology, explanation, "tweeting") from the firm after a negative service experience (all respective coefficients of "altruism" are statistically significant and have a positive sign in all four models).

On the contrary, a customer with a high vengeance motivation is less likely to react positively to any type of service recovery strategy after a negative service experience (all respective coefficients of "vengeance" are statistically significant and have a negative sign in all four models).

Finally, service customers who are economically motivated have positive attitudes towards financial compensation, whilst those who create UGC for self-enhancement purposes are more likely to react positively when a firm proactively "tweets" them. Venting motivation is not statistically significantly associated with any of the service recovery strategies.

_____Insert Table 7 about here_____

5. Discussion and further research

5.1. Customers' motivations for UGC creation after a negative service experience

The aim of this study was to investigate the online UGC behaviour of service customers and their attitudes towards a firm's response after a negative service experience, which to date is an under-researched area. After a negative service experience customers could be driven by altruism, vengeance, venting, economic, and self-enhancement motivation. Our first objective was to identify the most important motivations for UGC creation after a negative service

experience. Of the five motivations hypothesised, altruism and vengeance were the strongest drivers of UGC creation from a post-purchase negative service experience, followed by economic motivation. These findings were in line with H1a, H1b, and H1e. Yoo and Gretzel (2011) also find that altruism is the most important motivation, followed by venting. However, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) find no support for venting as a motivation to comment on a consumer platform, nor did the current study for UGC creation. More specifically, our findings suggest that venting and self-enhancement motivations are not significant predictors of UGC creation after a negative service experience. The insignificant impact of venting motivation on UGC creation could be attributed to the existence of a possible mediating "rumination" process, during which, service customers tend to ponder the causes and consequences of their anger or other negative emotions, but do not tend to act to change the situation (see Strizhakova et al., 2012). With regards to the insignificant impact of self-enhancement on UGC creation, probably, this could be attributed to the fact that self-enhancers tend to talk about their positive experiences rather than their negative ones, as the latter might dent their "good" image (see e.g., De Angelis et al., 2012).

5.2. The moderating role of Extraversion in the relationship between customers' motivations and UGC creation after a negative service experience

Our second objective was to investigate the factors that may moderate the relationship between motivations and UGC creation. More specifically, we found that extraversion positively moderates this relationship in the case of vengeance motivation, which was in support of H2b. This means that more vengeful extraverted service customers are more likely to spread negative UGC.

Furthermore, although extraversion was found to moderate the relationship between service customers with an altruistic motivation and UGC creation, the respective effect was not in the expected direction. Evidently, it seems that contrary to our expectations in H2a, extraversion dampens the positive relationship between altruism and UGC creation. This indicates that expressing disappointment may also occur with less extroverted customers, possibly because of the de-individuation effects of computer-mediated communication due to the "perceived" distance between the speaker and the receiver (i.e., visual anonymity). De-individuation refers to "a psychological state of decreased self-evaluation, causing anti-normative and disinhibited behavior" (Postmes et al., 1998, p.695). In some cases, this may result in experimental expressions of the self, in which consumers may intentionally act in

ways that are contradictory to their personality, so that an introverted or shy person may become more outspoken (Turkle, 1995). This could be also the explanation for the other three motivations (i.e., venting, self-enhancement and economic motivation), which were not found to be moderated by this personality trait.

5.3. Customers' motivations and attitude towards a firm's response to a service failure

Our third objective was to examine the relationship between customer motivations for UGC creation and their attitudes towards service recovery responses. As we found in this study, service customers motivated by altruism or self-enhancement have strong positive attitudes towards a firm's response to a service failure, in support of H3a and H3d respectively. These findings refine that of Harris et al. (2006) and are consistent with that of Liao (2007). Also, in support of H3b, service customers who are motivated by vengeance have strong negative attitudes towards a firm's recovery strategies.

A detailed look at these findings provides direct managerial implications. These managerial implications are of major importance for service providers, since the ability to maintain relationships with dissatisfied customers who create negative UGC represents a crucial issue for a firm's long-term survival. One way to maintain and enhance these relationships is by managing negative WOM of dissatisfied customers effectively and delivering persuasive and appropriate service recovery responses.

This study links sources of motivation to UGC creation and attitudes towards a firm's response to a service failure. A thorough understanding of the psychological makeup of UGC is very critical because the firm's responses to a service failure might be refined for maximum impact. Our findings imply that service customers can be segmented into different motivational groups (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Service providers should inspect the UGC that is posted, uploaded and written, not only to understand the motivations behind it, but also to react appropriately to it. The nature of such service recovery strategies should be customized to customers' motivations. More specifically, based on our findings, it is suggested that service customers motivated by altruism have strong positive attitudes towards any type of a firm's service recovery responses (e.g., compensation, apology, explanation, and "tweeting"). Evidently, this is a relatively easy-to-manage motivational group as it is receptive to any type of service recovery strategies. On the contrary, service customers that are motivated by vengeance seem to be rather predisposed, as they have negative attitudes towards any type of a firm's service recovery strategies. This motivational group has strong

negative attitudes towards a proactive response, whether this is an apology, an explanation, a financial compensation or a proactive tweet. Evidently, such customers need a special attention, and probably, a customized service recovery strategy at an individual basis would be advisable.

Regarding self-enhancers, our findings suggest that this motivational group will react positively when a firm proactively tweets them. This is not surprising, as self-enhancers have a flattering view of themselves (Sedikides and Gregg, 2008), are active on the Internet and expect positive feedback (Hepper et al., 2011). They therefore are more likely to have a positive attitude if they receive attention in the form of proactive actions from the firm. Service providers are advised to provide on time and positive feedback to this motivational group that will boost their ego and make them feel special and important for the firm. Finally, service customers motivated by economic purposes seem to prefer financial compensation.

From the preceding discussion becomes evident that marketing managers must understand their customers' motivations for UGC creation after a negative service experience for two main reasons: a) to provide the appropriate service recovery responses and b) to communicate these responses through those online platforms that will allow them to effectively reach the various motivational customer groups. The former has been already discussed in this section; insights into the latter will be given below.

5.4. Customers' UGC creation after a negative service experience and online platform usage

This study also investigated UGC creation and specific online platform usage after a negative service experience. In this direction, we found that all motivations are significantly related to specific online platform usage. Understanding in which social media such motivations are likely to find expression, can help service providers manage UGC following a negative service experience across these platforms. Some online platforms will be simpler to manage than others.

Forums and blogs are likely to be populated by altruistic-motivated customers, and therefore apologies and politeness should work effectively in these platforms. Specialist review sites, such as TripAdvisor, require great attention given their relevance to specific service providers and high visibility. Here, both altruistic- and vengeance-motivated customers are likely to be found, a finding which is consistent with the work of Sparks and Browning (2010). As noted earlier, altruistic and vengeance motivated service customers have very different attitudes towards a firm's service recovery strategies. That is, the former

should welcome a proactive intervention, whereas the latter should react negatively to it. It is therefore paramount to examine the content and tone of their reviews in detail to deduce the motivation behind them. This analysis seems feasible because reviews are typically fairly detailed regarding the experiences of a service.

YouTube is used by both self-enhancement and vengeance motivated customers for UGC creation after a negative service experience. In light of the different attitudes between these two motivational groups towards a firm's recovery response, a customized strategy is required.

We found that Twitter hosts the most emotionally motivated UGC creators (i.e., vengeance and venting motivated customers), highlighting the risks associated with this platform for service recovery. This is consistent with the concerns raised in prior research (e.g., Popken, 2011). Facebook is similar in terms of the motivational groups that it hosts, with the addition of self-enhancers, showing that this can also potentially be an emotionally charged platform, though self-enhancers may prove an important contact to spread successful service recovery WOM.

Company websites host groups of various motivational backgrounds, but are the only online platforms in which economically motivated service customers can be found. Therefore, compensation strategies may be required here. In addition to the UGC created by economically motivated service customers, company websites also host altruistic-, and vengeance-motivated service customers. Having vengeance-motivated service customers on a company website can be positive because these sites are directly under the control of the company, and therefore the impact of negative WOM can be instantly managed. At the same time, altruistic-motivated content can help balance the overall tone of the negative UGC on the company website in a constructive manner.

5.5. Limitations and research implications

This research has some limitations that further studies could address. First, future work may also consider investigating how the content and formats of postings across platforms may vary according to different motivations. This would be of great value to companies that need to infer the post's motivation from what is visible online to tailor their response to it accordingly. Second, subsequent research could help refine and expand the model by controlling for the seriousness of the service failure and/or the source of the problem (service provider or external), both of which might moderate UGC creation. Third, research could also

control for the actions the service provider takes during or after the service encounter. Fourth, research could explore dissatisfaction at subsequent stages, such as, after negative service experience and after a firm's response. For example, service customers who do not obtain their desired firm response may undertake further actions, which in the most extreme would take the form of vengeance. Dealing with vengeful consumers is a complex issue that, as this study shows, is difficult to manage proactively. Therefore, firms must understand the predictors of vengeance motivation, in addition to personality traits, such as extraversion, to discover if changes in motivation occur and whether they may lead to vengeful feelings.

The UGC market is likely to expand during the next decade. This paper focuses on an important and evolving area of research for which very little is currently known. We hope that this study will motivate further research in this key area of marketing.

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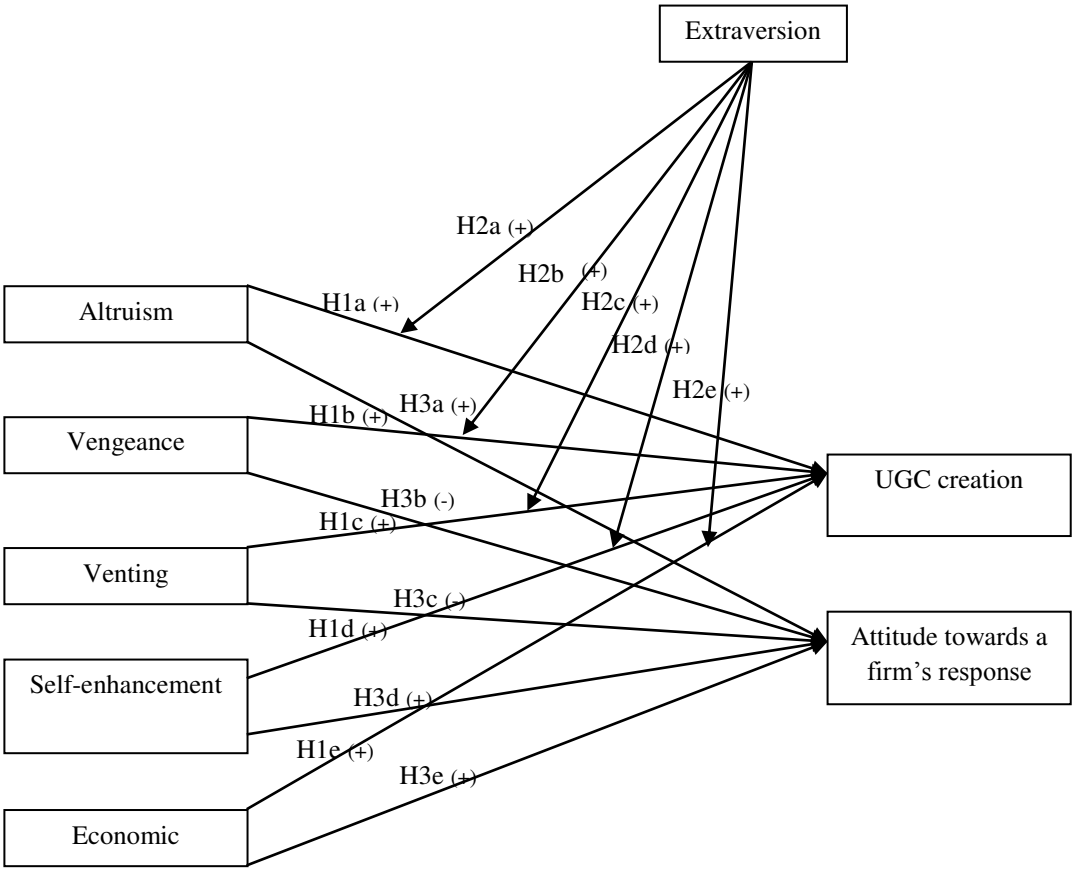

Figure 1. Conceptual model and hypothesized effects

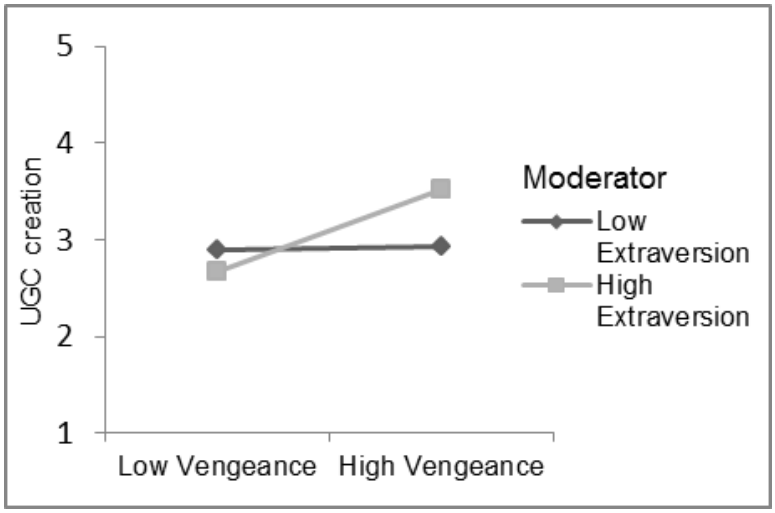

Figure 2. Interaction between Extraversion and Vengeance

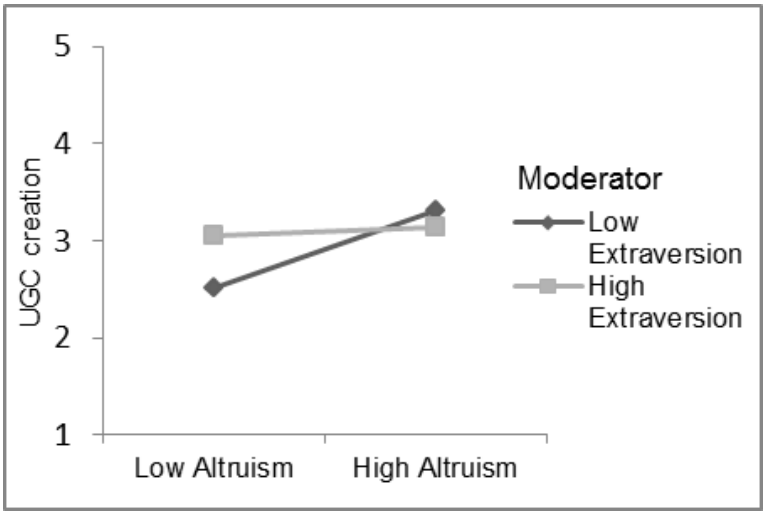

Figure 3. Interaction between Extraversion and Altruism

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

Demographic variable	**Total sample (in %)**
Gender	
Male	55.2
Female	44.8
Age	
Up to 20 years old	3.3
21-30	71.1
31-40	14.2
41-50	7.1
50 years old or more	4.2
Educational background	
Less than high school	21.8
Professional training	8.4
University degree	29.7
Postgraduate degree	35.1
Doctoral studies	5.0

Table 2. Measurement scales

Construct	Items	Source
Extraversion	▪ I talk a lot to different people at parties. ▪ I feel comfortable around people. ▪ I start conversations. ▪ I make friends easily. ▪ I don't mind being in the centre of attention.	(Yoo and Gretzel, 2011)
Altruism	▪ I wanted to help other people. ▪ Information other people posted helped me, so I wanted to return the favour. ▪ I wanted to contribute to a pool of information. ▪ I benefited, and wanted others to benefit as well.	(Yoo and Gretzel, 2011)
Vengeance	▪ I wanted to take revenge upon the company. ▪ I wanted to take actions to attempt to sabotage the company. ▪ I wanted the company to lose customers.	(adapted from Henning-Thurau et al. [2004] to use 'revenge' instead of vengeance as we distinguish between the two constructs) (both from McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009)
Venting	▪ I wanted to express my anger about my negative travel experience I had. ▪ I wanted to vent my negative feelings ▪ I wanted to warn others.	(from Wetzer et al., 2007) (both from Yoo and Gretzel, 2011)
Self-enhancement	▪ I wanted to entertain others. ▪ It is a fun thing to do. ▪ I wanted to express myself creatively ▪ I enjoy it.	(Yoo and Gretzel, 2011)
Economic	▪ I wanted to have a financial compensation. ▪ I was looking for a compensation. ▪ I wanted my money back.	(adapted from Baker et al. 2011)
UGC creation	▪ After the negative travel experience, I was temporarily more active on the internet for example posting, commenting, tagging, uploading, writing a review or blogging.	(new)
Platform for UGC creation	▪ Please indicate how often do you use these social media sites after you've had a negative travel experience by for example posting, commenting, tagging, uploading, writing a review or blogging.	(new)
Attitude towards firm's response	▪ If the company would offer me compensation, I would be …. to it ▪ If the company would make an apology to me for what happened, I would be …. to it. ▪ If the company would have explained what factors might have caused the problem, I would be ... to it ▪ If I tweet about my dissatisfaction about a company, and the company would tweet me, I would be … to it.	(adapted from Liao 2007) (new)

Table 3. Measures of validity and reliability

	CR	**AVE**	**MSV**	**ASV**
Extraversion	0.891	0.621	0.047	0.020
Altruism	0.891	0.672	0.176	0.075
Venting	0.816	0.598	0.497	0.144
Vengeance	0.918	0.789	0.497	0.123
Self-enhancement	0.865	0.617	0.067	0.027
Economic	0.956	0.878	0.134	0.068
Attitude towards firm's response	0.769	0.511	0.145	0.031

Table 4. Factor correlation matrix with square root of the AVE on the diagonal

	Extraversion	**Altruism**	**Venting**	**Vengeance**	**Self-enhancement**	**Economic**	**Attitude Towards firm's response**
Extraversion	0.788						
Altruism	0.217	0.820					
Venting	0.180	0.420	0.773				
Vengeance	0.067	0.152	0.705	0.888			
Self-enhancement	0.115	0.020	0.185	0.216	0.785		
Economic	0.150	0.242	0.348	0.366	0.259	0.937	
Attitude towards firm's response	0.038	0.381	-0.038	-0.183	0.054	0.055	0.714

Table 5. Structural model results

Structural relationships	Estimate	t-value	Sig.	Hypothesis	Result
Altruism → UGC creation	.226**	2.539	.011	H1a(+)	Support
Vengeance → UGC creation	.216**	1.988	.047	H1b(+)	Support
Venting → UGC creation	.081	.731	.465	H1c(+)	No support
Self-enhancement → UGC creation	.086	1.030	.303	H1d(+)	No support
Economic → UGC creation	.170*	1.929	.054	H1e(+)	Support
Extraversion → UGC creation	.090	1.054	.292		
Extraversion × Altruism → UGC creation	-.180**	-2.083	.037	H2a(+)	Support for the opposite
Extraversion × Vengeance → UGC creation	.204*	1.816	.069	H2b(+)	Support
Extraversion × Venting → UGC creation	.017	.155	.877	H2c(+)	No support
Extraversion × Self-enhancement → UGC creation	.057	.595	.552	H2d(+)	No support
Extraversion × Economic → UGC creation	-.111	-1.263	.207	H2e(+)	No support
Altruism → Attitude towards Firm's Response	.295***	5.256	.001	H3a(+)	Support
Vengeance → Attitude towards firm's response	-.211***	-3.149	.002	H3b(-)	Support
Venting → Attitude towards firm's response	-.034	-.489	.625	H3c(-)	No support
Self-enhancement → Attitude towards firm's response	.110**	2.089	.037	H3d(+)	Support
Economic → Attitude towards firm's response	.070	1.244	.214	H3e(+)	No support
Fit indices cmin/d.f.=1.027; NFI=0.98; CFI=0.99; RMSEA=0.011					

***p< .01. **p< .05. *p< .1.

Table 6. Motivations and online platform use after a negative service experience

Independent variable	Facebook	Twitter	Forums	Trip Advisor	Blogs	YouTube	Company website
Altruism	.968 (-003)	.320 (-068)	.000*** (.345)	.000*** (.347)	.003*** (.212)	.820 (-.018)	.002*** (.209)
Vengeance	.039** (.169)	.025** (.185)	.153 (.116)	.005*** (.225)	.991 (-.001)	.073* (.153)	.048** (.159)
Venting	.079* (.149)	.046** (.171)	.917 (-.009)	.261 (-.094)	.828 (-.019)	.926 (.008)	.081* (-.146)
Self-enhancement	.019** (.151)	.230 (.078)	.691 (-.025)	.378 (-.056)	.202 (.085)	.054* (.129)	.292 (-.066)
Economic	.738 (-.023)	.693 (-027)	.502 (-.045)	.678 (-.027)	.969 (-.003)	.948 (.005)	.000*** (.270)
R-square	.117	.104	.132	.146	.049	.050	.147
Adjusted R-square	.098	.085	.113	.127	.029	.030	.129
F	6.160***	5.429***	7.092***	7.951***	2.424**	2.450**	8.030***

Standardized B coefficients are in parentheses *****p<.1 ******p<.05 *******p<.01

TripAdvisor is a popular international travel review website. The UK based URL is www.tripadvisor.co.uk.

Table 7. Motivations and service recovery strategies after a negative service experience

Independent variable	**The company would offer me compensation**	**The company would make an apology to me for what happened**	**The company would explain what factors might have caused the problem**	**The company would "tweet" me back after "tweeting" my dissatisfaction**
Altruism	.014** (.170)	.000*** (.370)	.000*** (.322)	.008*** (.184)
Vengeance	.017** (-.197)	.071* (-.146)	.018** (-.193)	.013** (-.205)
Venting	.553 (-.050)	.388 (-.072)	.527 (-.053)	.627 (.041)
Self-enhancement	.651 (-.029)	.198 (.082)	.435 (.050)	.000*** (.249)
Economic	.000*** (.269)	.963 (-.003)	.970 (.003)	.931 (.006)
R-square	.113	.141	.122	.108
Adjusted R-square	.094	.122	.103	.089
F	5.933***	7.619***	6.484***	5.651***

Standardized B coefficients are in parentheses *p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<.01