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Sharing First or Privacy First? Examining Host Information Disclosure on Accommodation Sharing Platforms

JIANG HU
University of Texas at Arlington, jiang.hu@mavs.uta.edu

Jie Zhang
University of Texas Arlington, jiezhang@uta.edu

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Jiang Hu (jiang.hu@mavs.uta.edu); Jie Zhang (jiezhang@uta.edu)

Accommodation sharing platforms (ASPs) are two-sided collaborative consumption platforms that connect accommodation providers and consumers and enable them to electronically initiate and carry out the transaction with each other (Teubner and Flath 2019). Besides various benefits, such as reducing service costs and improve transaction efficiency, accommodation hosts can have online privacy concerns and physical privacy concerns (e.g., private space invasion, property safety) during the transaction, since trading with strangers on ASPs involves information asymmetry and offline interaction.

The existing conceptualizations of information privacy only consider the concern source from consumers' point of view and are unable to capture the uniqueness from the service provider's angle. Furthermore, extant privacy literature primarily has emphasized the role of individual-level mechanisms. The role of contextual factors in shaping disclosure behavior has not been theorized richly or explored in depth (Smith et al. 2011). ASPs provide various privacy-enhancing features to safeguard user's information. Such features can help alleviate privacy concerns and induce information disclosure (Smith et al. 2011). Therefore, there is a need for a cross-level study examining how the individual-level factors (such as privacy concern, perceived risk, and benefit expectancy) and platform-level factors (i.e., design features and privacy statement) interplay to collectively affect personal information disclosure.

The purpose of the current research is to (1) investigate the factors that influence hosts' willingness to share private information on ASPs in order to attract potential consumers; (2) illuminate the impact of platform design features on hosts' willingness to disclose private information on ASPs. Our study complements the existing privacy literature on a unique user group, i.e., hosts on ASPs, by demonstrating that hosts' participation in ASPs depends on extrinsic benefits, perceived risks and platform features. Additionally, this study takes the first step to bridge the gap in the existing literature that has so far ignored the different sources of privacy concern. Our research advances this body of knowledge by showing that on ASPs, service providers can have both online privacy concerns and physical privacy concerns. Their privacy concerns largely derive from platform visitors' opportunistic behavior rather than the platform per se. Compared with misgivings of online privacy threats, physical privacy concern plays a more important role in the host's decision.

References

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