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Trust between peers on peer-to-peer online platforms:
The influence of interpersonal factors

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Abstract

Peer-to-peer (P2P) online businesses are platforms for trading products and services online. This thesis has focused on the P2P marketplace Airbnb, where users can rent accommodations from each other. Based on the *theory of reasoned action* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), behaviour intentions like booking intentions are influenced by specific beliefs, such as trust. Considering interpersonal variables as influential factors for bookings, this study has investigated the impact of similarities between users and third party recommendations on booking intention, mediated by trust. In an online experiment with a 2 x 3 within subject design, participants reviewed six floor plans of apartments with peer recommendations attached, from six different hosts with fake profiles. These hosts had three times similar and three times dissimilar socio-demographic data to the participant. Statistical analyses indicated that trust had a significant mediating effect on booking intention. Furthermore, results have shown significant main effects of similarity and peer recommendation on booking intention. These findings may have an important impact on online market places to build detailed user reputation systems and affect recommendation systems, by ranking those offers higher where the similarity of users' socio-demographic data is higher.

Trust between peers on peer-to-peer online platforms: The influence of interpersonal factors

Introduction

In the past couple of years online shopping has been growing fast (Lee & Lin, 2005). Customers can buy almost any product, including food, clothes or holidays online. Besides business-to-customer (B2C) models there are multiple customer-to-customer (C2C) services which have recently become valuable business models. In 2014 the C2C platform Airbnb, for example, was ranked at 10.0 billion US dollars (Ferenstein, 2014). On C2C marketplaces private users rather than companies buy and sell products from each other (Musau, Wang, & Abdullahi, 2014). Synonyms for C2C businesses are peer-to-peer (P2P) marketplaces or social commerce. The wording social commerce highlights the connection between user profiles with their social network pages, thus supporting the creation of online reputations for their users (Kim & Park, 2012). According to Botsman (2010), the summary of users' online reputations leads to wealth, markets, power and personal identity in the new economy and will become more important in the future than users' credit history.

This study refers to the P2P marketplace Airbnb, where peers can book accommodations from other users. Airbnb describes itself as a “trusted community for people to list, discover and book unique accommodations around the world” (Airbnb, 2013). In comparison to B2B platforms, security, exchange, and refund policy are considered as being less satisfactory for users on C2C platforms (Kim & Park, 2012). Why do peers rent accommodations from people they do not know in person? According to Kim and Park (2012), purchase intention of products in social commerce is connected to trust. As C2C platforms are less safe for users, trust may be more important for peers on C2C than on B2C marketplaces. Botsman (2010) describes trust as “the currency of the new economy” for online business transaction workflows. But why do users trust unknown people?

Analysing the structure of P2P marketplaces like the Airbnb platform, recommendation systems provide feedback about products and providers. Based on a five-star rating system to summarize recommendations, homepages such as Airbnb generate an online reputation of their users and their accommodations. Besides the recommendation systems, other individual and interpersonal factors between buyer and seller may also be important for trusting one another – especially when significant perceived risk is involved. Based on the findings of

Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005), in online settings as in face-to-face interactions, trust is influenced by similarities between users.

The current study investigates recommendation systems and similarities between buyers and sellers and how these factors interact with trust and booking intentions. Constructs of trust and their interaction with recommendations and similarity will be further discussed below.

Definition of Trust

In literature there are different approaches to define trust. This study focuses on selected definitions, for example Mayer, Davis & Schoorman (1995), who define trust as follows:

Trust [...] is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation, that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party (p. 712).

Being vulnerable is described as someone perceiving that something is important which can be lost (Boss, 1978; Zand, 1972). The willingness to trust a second party in a risky situation therefore decreases the complexity of unexpected probabilities (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Applying this to Airbnb, travellers cannot control or monitor actions of hosts, so they are vulnerable to the behaviour of the host. If a traveller trusts a host, the perceived chance of an unpleasant stay will decrease.

In situations of trust there are some characteristics of trustor and trustee which determine the chance to trust another. On the one hand there is the trustor's propensity to trust, described as a person's trait which influences the chance to trust in general (Farris, Senner, & Butterfield, 1973; Nur, Wan, & Nazarie, 2013). Some personality traits, such as agreeableness and extraversion, have a positive influence on general trust (Hiraishi, Yamagata, Shikishima, & Ando, 2008). General trust is described here as trust in strangers (Yamagishi, 1998).

On the other hand there are different characteristics of the trustee, which influence their perceived trustworthiness. According to Lewis & Weigert (1985), there are three major cognitive components of a trustor's perceived trustworthiness of the trustee: honesty, benevolence and competence. Ability characterizes skills, competences and characteristics a

trustor believes the trustee has in a specific context (Mayer et al., 1995). In the context of Airbnb the trust of a traveller, i.e. the trustor, depends on the perceived competence of the host, i.e. the trustee. The perceived ability of the trustee depends on the situation (Mayer et al., 1995), for example a person can be a good host, but not a good taxi driver. If the trustee assumes the trustor will treat him well, the provider is perceived as being benevolent (Mayer et al., 1995). The trustor's perception that the trustee has an acceptable set of principles at fair price describes integrity. As explained later in more detail, these three components are indicators of how likely a traveller is to trust a host.

Model of Trust

The *theory of reasoned action* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) was created to understand and forecast human behaviour. According to this theory, in every mind-set there is some paradigm which leads to behaviour intentions which in turn are followed by behaviours (Figure 1). On the one hand there are specific beliefs and evaluations which induce attitudes toward a certain behavioural intention, followed by the behaviour. On the other hand, normative beliefs and the motivation to copy other people lead to subjective norms, followed by behavioural intention and behaviour. Normative beliefs are expectations of important role models, while subjective beliefs are created by accessible normative beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

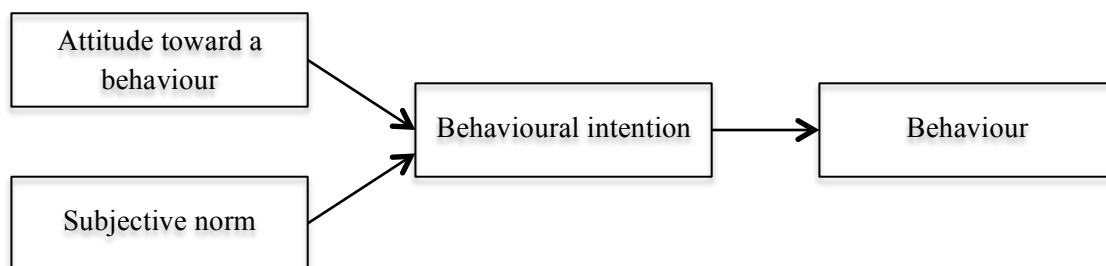


Figure 1. Theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)

Trust can be defined as a specific belief which creates an attitude towards a specific behaviour. Therefore trust as a belief is influenced by perceived competence, benevolence and integrity of another party in a certain situation (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002). Applying this to Airbnb, the chance of an apartment being booked is partly influenced by the traveller's belief in the host's competence, benevolence and integrity. The specific belief in

the host creates an attitude towards booking their apartments, which leads to an intention of booking and the final decision.

In previous research the *theory of reasoned action* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) has already been applied to the online context. Considering trust as a specific belief which influences behavioural intentions, Kim and Park (2012) investigated the social commerce characteristics of different homepages which might be connected to trust followed by purchase intention. Results indicated some significant impacts on reputation, size, information quality, transaction safety, communication, and word-of-mouth referrals towards trust, followed by purchase intention. In consequence the reasons why users trust and perform purchases on P2P platforms might differ from the reasons to trust a B2C company.

In the context of Airbnb, influential factors on trust and booking intentions can also be homepage characteristics and apartment characteristics like features, pictures, price or location. Furthermore traveller characteristics such as the propensity to trust or personality traits may have an impact on the user's tendency to book online in general. In order to understand why a traveller trusts a specific host more or less than another, the current study investigates the perceived trustworthiness of a specific host. The specific belief in a certain host should influence trust and the booking intention of a certain apartment.

Similarity, Sympathy and Trust

Considering online P2P bookings as a new challenge, the following study focuses on interpersonally related constructs to trust. In the online context, as well as in face-to-face situations, similarity and sympathy between people are associated with perceived trustworthiness (Smith, Menon, & Sivakumar, 2005; Irwin, McGrimmon, & Simpson, 2008). Sympathy here is defined as an effective response to an emotion of someone else (Eisenberg, 2000).

Based on the social psychological *law of attraction*, people like to interact with people who feel similar to them (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). The preference is connected to *cognitive consistency theories*, arguing that people like to be surrounded by identical states of minds to maintain their internal consistency. Being close to similar people supports their cognitive consistency and causes comfortable feelings (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). As a conclusion of increased interactions with similar people, sympathy between similar actors increases. This social psychological phenomenon is called *mere exposure effect* (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008).

As people tend to perceive similar people as likable and likable people as similar (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008), this study focuses only on similarities between people.

In previous literature, definitions differentiated between ‘value similarity’ and ‘interest similarity’ (Ziegler & Golbeck, 2006; Siegrist, Cvetkovich, & Roth, 2000). Value similarity embraces some attitudes, opinions and ideas people have in mind (Siegrist et al., 2000). Researchers in the past measured, for example, value similarity through verbal statements about nuclear power and artificial sweetener, which affect students’ perceived trustworthiness (Siegrist et al., 2000). In the online context interest similarity rather than value similarity between users is a tool to create recommendations of other products and services.

In *collaborative filtering* systems users receive recommendations for products from users who share their interests. Algorithms are based on the presumption that users who share interests are more likely to buy similar products (Ziegler & Golbeck, 2006). In consequence analysing latent variables behind favoured product choices, Ziegler and Golbeck (2006) showed in a mathematical model significant connections between shared interests and online trust.

How can interest similarity be measured on a platform where users book apartments of a certain host rather than buy music or books? Compared to other products, on Airbnb traveller can find additional provider information next to the product. To generate further information about hosts, travellers can review user profiles on Airbnb. The tendency to trust and rent from a certain host may in consequence be affected by similarities between traveller and host.

Researchers have investigated perceived similarity between users and peer recommenders based on their socio-demographic data (Smith et al., 2005). In an internet-based experiment by Smith et al. (2005), 252 participants chose a restaurant either for a birthday party or a commercial event from a database of 250 restaurants. The restaurants were classified according to three different types of cuisine, three price categories, and different locations. In the experiment, participants reviewed certain restaurants, user recommendations about the restaurants, and a short biography of each recommender. Recommenders had either similar, partially similar, or dissimilar profile information about personal taste, lifestyle, and hobbies to the test person. In the experiment participants valued their perceived rapport with the similar, partially similar, or dissimilar recommender. While perceived rapport was described as one independent variable, perceived influence by the recommender and

restaurant choice was described as the dependent variable. Trust in the research model was the mediator between independent and dependent variables. In two three-way analyses of variance, results showed some significant effects. There was a significant main effect of perceived rapport to the recommender on trust, as well as a significant main effect of perceived rapport to the recommender on perceived influence of restaurant choice. Perceived rapport to the recommender was influenced by perceived similarity based on the recommender's socio-demographic data.

Applying this to the context of Airbnb, perceived similarities between host and traveller may have a greater influence than perceived similarities between traveller and a third party recommender. In fact on Airbnb, similar or dissimilar socio-demographic data between host and traveller can affect perceived similarity, trust and chance of booking.

The Present Study

The construction of this thesis' research model is mainly based on previous research by Smith et al. (2005) and Kim & Park (2012), who focused on similarity and peer recommendations connected to online consumer decisions, mediated by trust. Based on these and other findings (Irwin et al., 2008; McKnight et al., 2002), in the following research model "similarity" between user and host and "peer recommendations" are described as independent variables. Booking intention is described as the dependent variable, mediated by trust (Figure 2).

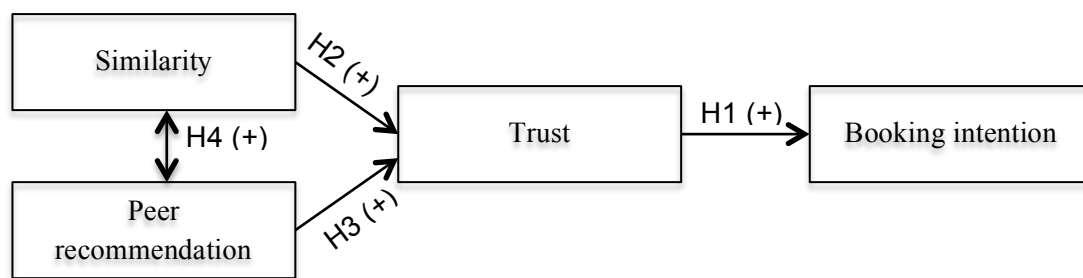


Figure 2. Trust research model of the current study

Combining the *theory of reasoned action* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) with previous findings about trust influencing online transactions (McKnight et al., 2002; Kim & Park, 2012), the current research model should predict how perceived trustworthiness of the host influences

the likelihood that a user will book their apartment. **H1:** *The greater the trust of the traveller in the host, the greater the intention to book the offered apartment.*

While Kim & Park (2012) investigated social-commercial characteristics, Smith et al. (2005) analysed interpersonal factors which affected trust and perceived influence of product choice. One of the main results of Smith et al. (2005) stated that higher similarity between users leads to greater trustworthiness in the recommender, which affects the perceived influence of a user's product choice. As the context of this thesis is a P2P marketplace on which peers provide their products to each other, similarity between traveller and host, rather than similarity between traveller and a third recommender, may have an influence on trust and booking intention. **H2:** *If the traveller and host have similar socio-demographic data, the chance of booking will increase, which is mediated by trust in the similar host.*

The summary of different recommendations from other users may affect the host's trustworthiness and the final booking intention as well. Based on the research of Smith et al. (2005), peer recommendations affected perceived influence for restaurant choices. Applying this to the current context, peer recommendation can influence the apartment choice on Airbnb too. **H3:** *The higher the recommendation of an apartment is, the higher the booking intention of the offered apartment, mediated by trust in the host.*

For an explorative analysis there is an interaction effect between peer recommendations and similarity towards booking intention predicted. **H4:** *For hosts with similar socio-demographic data, higher recommendations enhance the chance of booking mediated by trust more than for hosts with dissimilar socio-demographic data.*

An additional analysis considers gender as an influencing variable for trust and chance of booking. In an investment game by Buchan, Croson, and Solnick (2008), women are considered as being more trustworthy than men. Transferred to the online context the following hypothesis will be discussed. **H5:** *The probability of a booking of an offered apartment mediated by trust will be higher if the host is female.*

General Method

Overview

The main online experiment was established to investigate peer recommendations and similarities between users, which influence booking intentions on P2P platforms such as Airbnb, mediated by trust. In the main experiment participants received six equally attractive apartments, with different peer recommendations from six different fake hosts. To avoid distinctions in perceived attractiveness of apartments, in a pilot study participants rated different fake apartments related to their attractiveness.

Experiment 1

Pilot Study

The aim of the pilot study was to create 25 equally attractive apartments which participants randomly received afterwards in the main experiment. Every fake apartment presented had a similar description, floor plan, and a certain price within a small range. No differences were hypothesized between mean scores of the apartment evaluations (H0a).

Participants. Participants were 43 people, recruited via social media, in January 2015. The sample size for the 25 different apartments ranged between 30 and 34 participants. There was no information about gender and age.

Method

In an online survey (Qualtrics, Provo UT), participants reviewed 25 different apartments in a row. In the description of the apartments, the participants received a computer drawn graphic floor plan with the same number of square meters, two rooms, one kitchen, one bathroom, and almost the same interior. All flats were located in the centre of Paris. The text included a short description about location and setting of each apartment and each one was suitable for two people, with one double bed in the bedroom. Check-in time was always 1 pm and check-out at 10 am. Additionally all flats were equipped with a kitchen, Internet, TV, utensils, and heating. The price ranged between 105€ and 115€ per night. After reviewing every apartment, participants rated on a 7-point Likert scale the apartment from (1) *I do not like the apartment* to (7) *I really like the apartment*.

Results and Discussion

To analyse differences in apartment evaluations, the data were transferred to a long format with the 25 apartments as the independent variable and mean scores for the evaluation of each apartment as the dependent variable (Figure 3). Calculated was a one-way ANOVA to compare mean scores of evaluation for the 25 apartments.

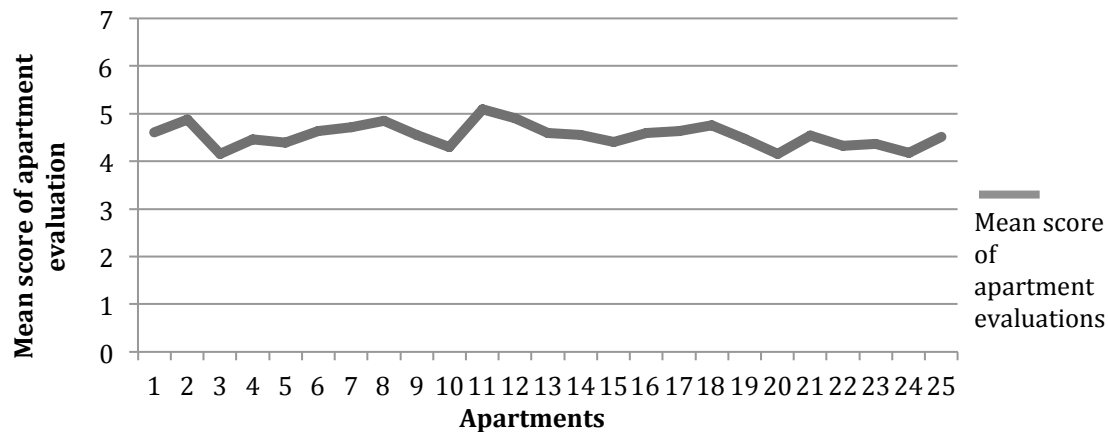


Figure 3. The figure shows the results of the one-way ANOVA. Compared are different mean scores of the evaluations of the 25 apartments.

Descriptive statistics showed a mean score and standard deviation of $M = 4.73$, $SD = 1.32$, respectively, for the average evaluation of all 25 apartments. The significant analysis of the Levene Test, $F(24, 779) p < .05$, assumed no violation against homogeneity, an assumption to run the ANOVA. In following the result of the one-way ANOVA was not significant, $F(24, 779) = 1.14$, $p > .05$. Because mean scores of the 25 apartment evaluations did not significantly vary, the H_0 was accepted. The result was interpreted as all 25 apartments being perceived as equally attractive.

Experiment 2

Main Experiment

Based on the results of the pilot study, all 25 apartments were selected in the apartment pool and offered to the participants in the main experiment. In an online experiment participants received six of these 25 apartments, along with peer recommendations and fake

hosts who had similar or dissimilar socio-demographic data. For each apartment and host, participants rated perceived similarity, perceived trustworthiness, and their booking intention.

Method

Participants. In total 355 people, with 133 men (37.5%) and 222 women (62.5%), between the ages 18 and 66 years ($M = 29.9$, $SD = 11.34$) completed the online experiment. 68 (51.1%) male participants were students and 60 (45.1%) were employed. Among the females 131 (59%) participants were students and 73 (32.9%) were employed. The Chi Square test for gender and occupation was significant $\chi^2(2) = 6.67$, $p < .05$, so there was a distribution difference between occupation in dependence of gender. At the end female participants were more often students and male participants were more often employed. Since the study focuses on different variables rather than gender, the distribution should not have a negative impact on the quality of results.

Design. The experiment was constructed in a 2 x 3 within-subject design. The two independent variables were similarity between participant and host and peer recommendations. Booking intention was the dependent variable in the model. As a mediator variable, trust in the fake provider was measured as well. Control variables in the model were personality traits of the participant, previous experiences with Airbnb and disposition to trust.

Measurement. The online experiment was constructed by Qualtrics (Provo, UT) and distributed by social media channels via Internet in February 2015. All participants started with the same scenario to plan a trip to Paris with his/her best friend, provided that they had enough money to book an apartment. After reading the scenario, participants reviewed six different apartments, offered by six different fake providers. All six different apartments were selected from 25 similarly evaluated apartments which differed only in peer recommendation (IV), presented on a five-star scale. To each apartment, a three, four, or five star rating was allotted by chance. After viewing each apartment, participants rated how much they liked it (1) *I don't like the apartment* to (7) *I really like the apartment*.

In the next step a fake host, who provided the respective apartment, was shown to the participant. Therefore similarity (IV) between traveller and host was manipulated based on the participant's socio-demographic data. After viewing each fake host, participants rated how similar they perceived themselves to be to the previous provider with (1) *I don't perceive the provider to be similar to myself* to (7) *I perceive the provider to be really similar to myself*.

The question was followed by a trust questionnaire with 4 items, measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1) *I totally disagree* to (7) *I totally agree* (Kim & Park, 2012) about perceived trustworthiness of the previous provider. Furthermore after every trust questionnaire, participants rated on a scale from 0 to 100% the chance of booking the apartment for their trip: (0%) *there is no chance of my booking the apartment* to (100%) *I would definitely book the apartment*.

In total participants viewed six apartments from six different providers. After receiving all six apartments and providers, participants answered three additional questionnaires. First of all, participants received the Big Five Inventory which measured personality traits based on the Big Five personality traits, including agreeableness and extraversion (John & Srivastava, 2009). The questionnaire consists of 10 items, ranging on a 5-point Likert scale from (1) *not at all correct* to (5) *completely correct* about participants' perception of their own personality traits. Users' disposition to trust was measured with 9 items on a 7-point Likert scale from (1) *not at all correct* to (7) *completely correct* (Jones & Leonard, 2008). To check previous user experience with Airbnb, participants received a 7-point Likert scale with 5 items about former experiences with Airbnb, ranging from (1) *not at all correct* to (7) *completely correct* (Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003).

Manipulation and manipulation check. For the manipulation of similar and dissimilar fake hosts, at the very beginning participants completed data about gender, age, occupation, favourite hobby, and interests. Interests were split into social, political, social and political, or no interests at all. Hobbies, such as subject of study or the field of work, were chosen from a list of subcategories. Based on this information similar and dissimilar fake hosts were constructed for each participant. In total participants reviewed three similar and three dissimilar hosts. For similar hosts information about age, occupation, hobby, and interests, were similar to the participant's socio-demographic data. For dissimilar hosts, the content of all categories differed from their data. As an example, a female participant, who was 19 years old, a student of a health-related subject, who liked individual sports, and who was engaged in socially related fields; was a profile for a host, who was also female, 21 years old, a student of psychology, who liked running, and supported fundraising projects for children. To avoid gender effects, in the dissimilar condition, people received one male and one female provider. After meeting each provider, participants rated their perceived similarity to check

the manipulation on a 7-point scale from (1) *I perceive myself as dissimilar* to (7) *I perceive myself as very similar* to the previous provider.

Results

Reliability check. To estimate the fit of the current research model, scales of the experiment were assessed in detail. For the scale of trust towards different providers, Cronbach's alpha was measured for internal consistency. The analysis showed a result of $\alpha = .930$ ($k = 4$, $N = 355$) which exceeds the minimum of $\alpha = .70$ for a reliable scale (Nunnally, 1979). Variables of booking intention and perceived similarity were measured with one item, so there was no reliability to calculate.

Manipulation check for similarity. To check if participants perceived themselves as more similar to the similar and less similar to the dissimilar providers based on their socio-demographic data, after every provider the participants answered a question on how similar they evaluated the provider to be to themselves. In conditions 1, 2, and 3 participants viewed providers who had similar socio-demographic data to themselves and in conditions 4, 5, and 6 participants viewed providers who did not have similar data. The two times three review condition of virtual providers was one independent variable. The second independent variable was similarity split into similar and dissimilar providers. Perceived similarity was described as the dependent variable. In a 2 x 3 factorial ANOVA effects of similarity and virtual providers were calculated (Figure 4).

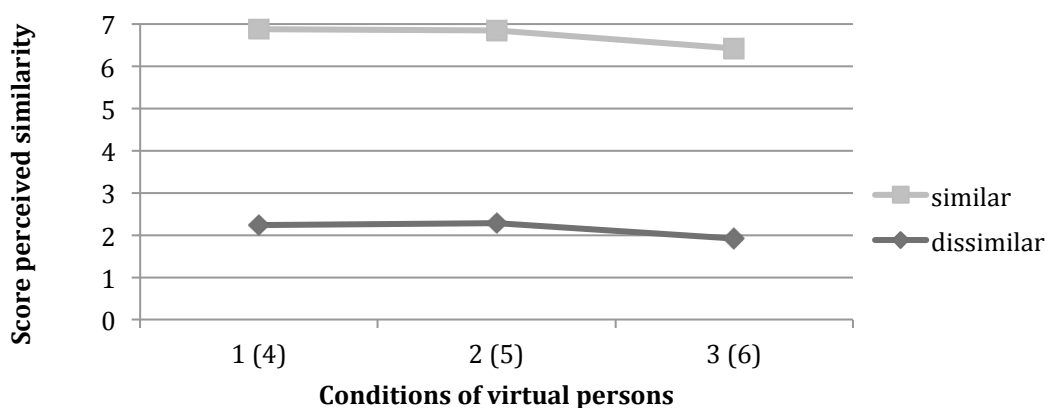


Figure 4. Manipulation check for similarity: Results of a 2 x 3 factorial ANOVA. On the X-axis there are two times three different conditions of received profiles. On the Y-axis there is the score of perceived similarity. Compared are similar and dissimilar virtual providers with their perceived similarity in different conditions.

The analysis of the Mauchly Test showed no significant result $\chi^2(2) = 0.17, p > .05$, so the requirement of sphericity to run an ANOVA was not violated (Field, 2009). The following mean scores of the ANOVA indicated that participants perceived themselves as being more similar to providers with similar socio-demographic data ($M = 4.57, SD = 0.06$) as to providers with dissimilar socio-demographic data ($M = 2.15, SD = 0.05$). For similarity the results of the analysis showed a significant main effect, $F(1, 354) = 1257.6, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .78$. For virtual providers there was a significant main effect too, $F(2, 708) = 10.70, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. There was a significant interaction effect between the Similarity x Virtual Provider, $F(2, 708) = 4.52, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Referring to effect size intervals of Cohen (1988), $\eta_p^2 \geq .01$ represents small effect sizes, $\eta_p^2 \geq .06$ moderate effects, and $\eta_p^2 \geq .14$ large effects. Therefore the main effect for similarity had a large effect size $\eta_p^2 = .78$, whereas effect sizes for virtual providers $\eta_p^2 = .03$ and interaction between Similarity x Virtual Provider $\eta_p^2 = .01$ were small (Cohen, 1988). Despite the significant interaction effect, main effects can be interpreted without limits because graphs for perceived similarity of similar and dissimilar providers were located parallel to each other (Bortz & Döring, 2006). In those conditions where participants received similar providers based on similar socio-demographic data, participants scored higher in perceived similarity than in conditions with dissimilar providers. Results indicated a successful manipulation of similar or dissimilar virtual providers, based on their socio-demographic data.

Manipulation check for attraction of the apartment. To avoid differences in booking intention because of different apartment evaluations, all six apartments in all six apartment-host conditions should be perceived as being similarly attractive. Therefore a repeated measurement ANOVA compared the mean scores of the different apartments in all six conditions. For the repeated measurement, ANOVA assumption of sphericity was tested, $p > .05$. The average mean score for all the apartments was $M = 4.85, SD = 1.33$ (Table 1). The analysis showed no significant result, $F(5, 1770) = 0.52, p > .05$. The result concluded that all apartments across all six conditions were perceived as being similarly attractive.

Table 1

Repeated measurement ANOVA for attraction of the apartments (n=355)

Apartment condition	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	4.90	1.37
2	4.88	1.36
3	4.85	1.32
4	4.79	1.30
5	4.85	1.29
6	4.82	1.35

Note. *M*= Mean scores and *SD*= Standard deviation of apartments received in the six different conditions

Correlations between variables. Measured were correlations between perceived similarity, trust, booking intention, experiences with Airbnb, and disposition to trust (Table 2). Mean scores for trust ($M = 50.1$, $SD = 1.11$) and mean scores of perceived similarity for each fake host ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.81$) were located around the scales' average values. For booking intentions the result of the analysis showed a mean score of $M = 60.13$, $SD = 25.87$, from a 0 to 100% chance of booking for each apartment. The significantly small correlation between perceived similarity and trust $r = .29$, $p < .001$, a moderate correlation between perceived similarity and booking intention $r = .42$, $p < .001$, and a large correlation between trust and booking intention $r = .59$, $p < .001$ (Cohen, 1988), will be discussed in more detail in the next paragraphs.

Table 2

Overview pearson correlations (n= 355)

	2	3	4	Disposition to trust
1. Perceived similarity	.29**	.42**	.01	.09**
2. Trust		.59**	.01	.29**
3. Booking intention			.02	.14**
4. Experience with Airbnb				-.03

Note. ** $p < .001$ is significant

Peer recommendation and evaluation of apartments. Predicted were positive correlations between peer recommendation and evaluation of an apartment across all six conditions. For condition 1 with $r = .25, p < .001$, condition 3 with $r = .16, p < .001$, condition 4 with $r = .15, p < .001$, and condition 6 with $r = .17, p < .001$ results showed significantly positive spearman correlations. The median of those correlations was $r = .15$. Only for condition 2 with $r = .07, p > .05$ and for condition 5 with $r = .04, p > .05$ were the correlations not significant. Results showed that the higher peer recommendations were, the better the evaluation of the apartment (Cohen, 1988).

Main analysis. The main analysis focused on the effects of similarity and peer recommendation as independent variables on booking intention as dependent variable, mediated by trust. The research model is presented by a repeated measurement 2 x 3 factorial design. Repeated were six apartments from six providers, all participants reviewed. To run the main analysis, the six conditions were merged into one long format.

In the first step a 2 x 3 ANOVA analysed the main research model, without the influence of trust as a mediator. The assumption of normal distribution was confirmed by descriptive analyses. Homogeneity was tested by the Levene Test, which was significant, $F(5, 2124) = 5.94, p < .001$, so the requirement for homogeneity to calculate an ANOVA was violated. As the row sum for the amount of similar and dissimilar providers was balanced in all three, four, and five star conditions, the ANOVA is robust enough to continue (Backhaus, Erichson, Plinke, & Weiber, 2008). There was a significant main effect for similarity between dissimilar ($M = 54.15, SD = 0.77$) and similar conditions ($M = 66.29, SD = 0.77$) with a large effect size, $F(1, 2124) = 125.73, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .06$ (Cohen, 1988). Between groups of peer recommendation with three stars ($M = 55.72, SD = 0.92$), four stars ($M = 62.33, SD = 0.94$), and five stars ($M = 62.61, SD = 62.61$) the main effect for peer recommendation was also significant with a small effect size, $F(2, 2124) = 17.71, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .02$ (Cohen, 1988). There was no significant interaction effect for Similarity x Peer Recommendation, $F(2, 2124) = 0.92, p > .05, \eta_p^2 = .00$.

Because trust was excluded in the statistical calculation, results of the ANOVA were compared with the results of an ANCOVA (Figure 5), with trust included as a covariate. For the assumption check the Levene Test indicated a significant result, so homogeneity was violated, $F(5, 2124) = 7.24, p < .001$. Due to a balanced row sum for similar and dissimilar

providers across all peer recommendation conditions, the ANCOVA analysis was selected to be the most stable statistical method for calculation (Backhaus et al., 2008).

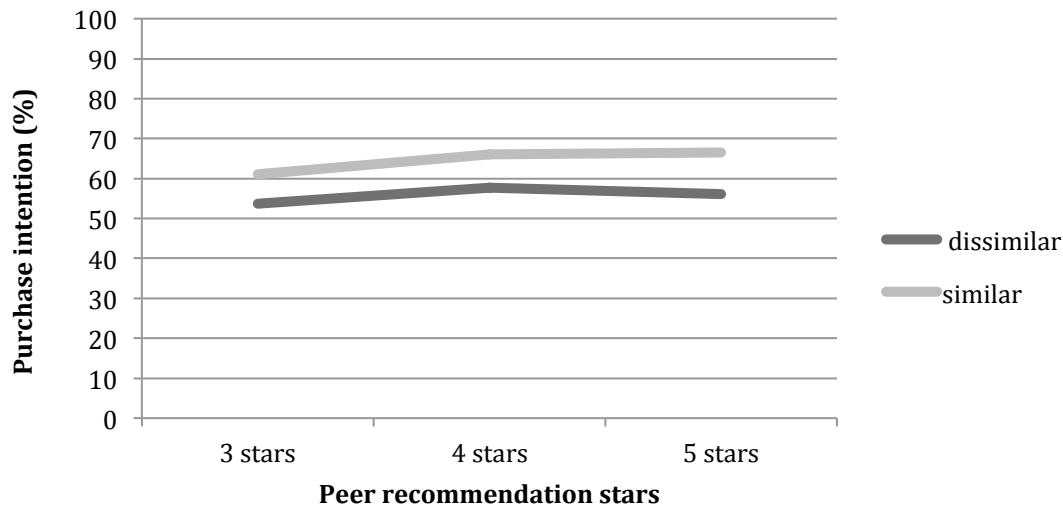


Figure 5. Results of the 2 x 3 factorial ANCOVA. On the X-axis there are peer recommendations with stars. The Y-axis represents the probability of booking intention. Compared are means of the similar and dissimilar condition.

Trust as a covariate had a significant influence on booking intention as the dependent variable with a large effect size, $F(1, 2123) = 1094.60, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .34$ (Cohen, 1988). Comparing the probability of bookings between groups of dissimilar providers ($M = 55.80, SD = 0.62$) and similar providers ($M = 64.56, SD = 0.62$), results showed a significant main effect for similarity with a large effect size, $F(1, 2123) = 97.63, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .04$ (Cohen, 1988). The main effect for peer recommendation between groups of three stars ($M = 57.33, SD = 0.75$), four stars ($M = 61.85, SD = 0.76$), and five stars ($M = 61.35, SD = 0.78$) was significant with a small effect size, $F(2, 2123) = 10.75, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .01$ (Cohen, 1988). There was no significant interaction effect between Similarity x Peer Recommendation, $F(2, 2123) = 1.09, p = .335, \eta_p^2 = .00$ (Table 3).

Table 3

2 x 3 ANCOVA with trust as a covariate (n=355)

Source	Sum of square	df	F	η^2_p	p
Trust	450379.7		450379.47	.04	.000
Peer recommendation	8849.16	2	4424.58	.01	.000
Similarity	40172.17	1	40172.17	.04	.000
Peer recommendation x similarity	900.63	2	1.09	.00	.355
Residual	873520.2	2123			
$R^2 = .387$					

Note. $p < .05$ is significant

To analyse the impact of trust as a mediator included in the research model, a multiple linear regression analysis provided further insights. For the regression analysis trust was included as another independent variable next to similarity and peer recommendation (Table 4). The Durbin-Watson value was 1.15, which is in the acceptable range between 1 and 3 (Field, 2009, p. 221). The collinearity statistics with a value close to 1 indicated that different independent variables were not measuring the same dimension (Field 2009, p. 224). Both results supported the continuation with the multiple linear regression analysis to evaluate the research model. The results of the analysis showed that variables of the research model in total explained 38.3% ($R^2 = 0.38$) of the variance for booking intention. The results of the regression analysis indicated that trust was the predictor with the greatest influence on booking intention $\beta = .57, p < .001$. With $\beta = .57$ trust had a large effect on booking intention (Cohen, 1988). Peer recommendation as the second predictor $\beta = .07, p < .001$ and similarity as the third predictor $\beta = -.17, p < .00$ had significant impacts on booking intention too. The $\beta = -.17$ for similarity showed a negative result because of the polarity of similar group 1 and dissimilar group 2.

Table 4

Multiple linear regression with trust as a predictor (n=355)

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	64.927	2.560		25.359	-
Z trust	14.723	.445	.569	33.108	.000
Stars	2.056	.541	.065	3.802	.000
Similarity	-8.644	.886	-.167	-9.753	.000

Note. $p < .05$ is significant

Further analysis. To consider differences between trust in men and women, the sample was split into men and women. Compared was the mean score of trust between women ($M = 63.30$, $SD = 25.27$) and men ($M = 56.38$, $SD = 26.08$). The analysis of the t test showed a significant result, $t(2128) = 6.21$, $p < .001$, so participants perceived female providers as being more trustworthy than male providers.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1, the more a traveller trusts a host, the higher the booking intention of their apartment, is supported by results of the multiple linear regression. Those results present trust as the strongest predictor for booking intention, $\beta = .57$, $p < .001$. The significant influence of trust included as a covariate in the ANCOVA analysis, $F(1, 2123) = 1094.60$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .34$, showed a significant effect on booking intention too. Both of these results confirm hypothesis 1, predicting that the more users trust a certain host, the higher the booking intention probability of the offered apartment.

Hypothesis 2, if traveller and host have similar socio-demographic data, the chance of booking will increase, which is mediated by trust in the similar host, is supported by the results of the analysis of the 2 x 3 ANOVA with $F(1, 2124) = 125.73$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$; and results of a 2 x 3 ANCOVA, $F(1, 2123) = 97.63$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. These significant main effects confirm hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3, the greater the recommendation of an offered apartment is, the greater the booking intention of the apartment mediated by trust, is supported by a 2 x 3 ANOVA, $F(2, 2124) = 17.71, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .02$; and a second 2 x 3 ANCOVA, $F(2, 2123) = 10.75, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .01$. The significant results support the confirmation of hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4, predicting hosts with similar socio-demographic data, higher recommendations enhance the chance of booking mediated by trust more than for hosts with dissimilar socio-demographic data, is neither supported by the results of the ANOVA, $F(2, 2124) = 0.92, p > .05$; nor by results of the ANCOVA, $F(2, 2123) = 1.09, p > .05, \eta_p^2 = .00$. With and without trust as a covariate in the analysis, there was no significant interaction effect between similarity and peer recommendation. In conclusion hypothesis 4 is not confirmed.

Hypothesis 5, the probability to book an offered apartment mediated by trust is higher if the host is a female provider, is supported by the t test analysis result, $t(2128) = 6.21, p < .001$. The significant result likewise confirms hypothesis 5.

Summary and Concluding Discussion

The goal of the study is to investigate interpersonal variables which influence peer interactions on online peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, such as Airbnb. A positive influence on booking intention was predicted for an apartment offered by a similar peer and better peer recommendations, mediated by trust. The statistical analyses have underlined that similarity, peer recommendation, and trust affects the booking intention of an apartment. The significant impact is interpreted as the greater the similarity between peers or the better the peer recommendations, the greater the chance of booking intention mediated by trust.

Hypothesis summary. In detail the results confirm hypothesis 1, the more the traveller trusts a host, the higher the intention that the traveller will book the hosts' apartment becomes. The outcomes of the statistical analysis confirm hypothesis 2, if the traveller and host have similar socio-demographic data, the booking intention will increase, which is mediated by trust in the host. Hypothesis 3, the greater the recommendation of an offered apartment is, the greater the booking intention of the apartment mediated by trust, is confirmed by statistical analysis as well. Results have indicated no significant interaction effect between similarity and peer recommendation. Therefore H4, stating that for hosts with similar socio-demographic data higher recommendations enhance the chance of booking, mediated by trust,

more than for hosts with dissimilar socio-demographic data, is not confirmed. Further analyses confirm hypothesis 5. In conclusion the probability of a booking of an offered apartment mediated by trust is higher if the host is a female provider.

Post-hoc explanations. Results of the ANOVA and ANCOVA pointed out some small effects for similarity and peer recommendation (Cohen, 1988). Comparing results of the ANOVA and ANCOVA effect sizes have become smaller, with trust included as a covariate from $\eta_p^2 = .06$ to $\eta_p^2 = .04$ for similarity; and from $\eta_p^2 = .02$ to $\eta_p^2 = .01$ for peer recommendation. Overall these effects for similarity and peer recommendations towards booking intention were small (Cohen, 1988). Post-hoc investigations have analysed influences of peer recommendations, which indicated a significant main effect of peer recommendations towards booking intention between three ($M = 57.33$, $SD = 0.74$) and four stars ($M = 61.85$, $SD = 0.76$); but no significant effect between four and five stars ($M = 61.35$, $SD = 0.78$). These findings suggest a ceiling effect of peer recommendation. Having good four star and excellent five stars ratings for apartments could nevertheless enhance the impact of other variables, which were not surveyed in the experiment.

Interpretation of peer recommendation. Small significant main effects for similarity and peer recommendation agree with results of the study ‘Online Peer and Editorial Recommendations, Trust and Choice in Virtual Markets’ of Smith et al. (2005). In the research results of the analysis presented a significant main effect for peer recommendations towards perceived influence of a certain restaurant choice. In the current study, peer recommendations were manipulated by recommendations of three, four, or five stars. In the study of Smith et al. (2005), participants only reviewed a written statement of other peer recommenders with the recommender’s biography. Analysed was more the influence of a recommender, rather than the quality of their recommendation. Therefore those results support the assumption that recommendations regardless of their quality have an impact on perceived influence towards product choice (Smith et al., 2005). Compared to the study of Smith et al. (2005), the current study investigates quality differences of recommendations. Peer recommendation was operationalized in three steps with three, four, or five stars. Therefore results of the current study lead to further insights into moderate, good, or very good star recommendations. Considering the previous findings of peer recommendations (Smith et al., 2005; Wang & Benbasat, 2005) along with findings of the current results,

overall recommendation systems seem to have an impact on online purchases.

Interpretation of similarity. Furthermore similarity between participants and peer recommenders appeared to have an impact on perceived influence of restaurant choice. The difference between the current and the previous study of Smith et al. (2005) is that the current study refers to similarity between booker and host and not to the similarity to a third peer recommender. Besides in the current research similarity is a dichotomous variable and does not differ in a partially similar host in comparison to the similar and dissimilar hosts. The tendency to trust and buy from people who are similar to oneself is supported by previous research (Smith et al., 2005; Irwin et al., 2008) and embedded in social psychological theories. According to these theories, people like those people more who are similar to them (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). As similarity and sympathy are connected to each other, results of previous research about connections between sympathy and trust (Irwin et al., 2008) are also consistent with the findings of the current study.

Interpretation of trust. Results of the current study support the conclusion that trust should be included as a mediator in the research model. The result of the ANCOVA with trust included as a covariate had a large effect on booking intention (Cohen, 1988). Trust as a covariate in the analysis of the ANCOVA also decreased small effect sizes of similarity and peer recommendation of the ANOVA analyses. Results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicated that trust had a large effect on booking intention (Cohen, 1988). Trust in a certain provider, as a further independent variable next to similarity and peer recommendation, explained the largest part of the variance of booking intention.

These results are consistent with previous findings. In the study of Kim & Park (2012), results showed that trust also had a significant effect on purchase intention. Trust in peer recommenders also significantly affected the perceived influence on restaurant choices (Smith et al., 2005). In summary trust in homepage characteristics (Kim & Park, 2012), peer recommendations (Smith et al., 2005), as well as trust in providers, seem to be a major driving force behind users online purchases.

In general the current findings are consistent with the *theory of reasoned action* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), which Kim and Park (2012) applied to the online environment. Therefore in the current study similarity and peer recommendations influence the specific belief trust which leads to the behavioural intention to book. According to the *theory of reasoned action*

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), booking intention also affects the actual booking of the apartment.

Research Implications. The results of the multiple linear regression have shown that 38.3% of the variance of booking intention was explained by trust, similarity and peer recommendation. Next to similarity and peer recommendations, other factors could also influence trust, the booking intention and the final booking. In the current study control variables were experiences with Airbnb, disposition to trust and the Big Five personality traits. Those variables are all within-user variables and are not connected to any interpersonal variables. Other interpersonal variables influencing online purchases could be sympathy or empathy. As discussed above, similarity and sympathy are closely connected to each other (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). In consequence sympathy may also affect booking intention, mediated by trust on Airbnb. In another trust model of Feng, Lazar, and Preece (2004), statistical analyses showed that empathy had a significant effect on interpersonal trust in the online context. Those findings, in addition to findings from the current study, might lead to further research into empathy, trust and booking intention on Airbnb or different P2P platforms.

Most of the recent studies focused on business-to-customer or business-to-business companies (Nicholson, Compeau, & Sethi, 2001; Kim & Park, 2012). The current study instead focuses on bookings on P2P marketplaces. As the growing P2P online industry is growing (Ferenstein, 2014), future research should investigate other P2P platforms and other variables influencing online booking intentions. Focusing on other P2P platforms can lead to further insights into P2P online bookings and increase the quality of this type of platform.

Criticisms. The current online experiment has some limitations. First of all, validity and reliability can only be calculated for questionnaires with more than one item. Therefore in future research, multiple item questionnaires should be used. Examining different variables of the experiment, similarity was manipulated by creating similar and dissimilar fake profiles. Future investigations should include steps in addition to the similar and dissimilar condition. Moreover the provider's description can be stretched with more socio-demographic data, so profiles are more closely connected to real profile layouts and the research intention will be less transparent. Profiles were constructed with bricks of subcategories from socio-demographic categories, which should be tested in the future. In the experiment flow, apartments and peer recommendation stars were based on two samples with replacement, so

participants could receive one apartment or a certain peer recommendation more often than another one. In future research the apartments should be randomized without replacement.

For the statistical analysis the repeated measurement design was transferred to a long format, so trust could be respected as a covariate in the statistical model. The transformation changed the repeated measurement design of the experiment which should be avoided in future investigations.

Relevance and practical implications. Findings of the current research support the prediction that peer recommendations affect the product choice in the online context. According to the theory of Botsman (2010) that users' online reputation will become more powerful than our credit history in the new economy, recommendations will also become more and more powerful. A large number of P2P platforms such as Airbnb already connect user profiles to their Facebook accounts to enlarge their profile information (Botsman, 2010). As a consequence users' online reputations, built on their recommendation history, could become an important driving force for user creditability in online markets in the future (Botsman, 2010).

Moreover, an increasing chance of bookings between users who have a similar socio-demographic background can have an impact on online *collaborative filtering systems* (Ziegler & Golbeck, 2006). Nowadays in *collaborative filtering systems* recommendations are based on previous purchases. In next steps product recommendations could also be based on users who have a similar socio-demographic background.

Conclusion. The results of the study have shown the effects of similarity between user socio-demographic data and peer recommendation on booking intention on Airbnb. Trust was indicated as an influential covariate which mediates the influence of similarity and peer recommendation on booking intention. These findings agree with results from previous studies which were applied to the P2P online environment. In the future, these results may have a great impact on user online reputation systems or on online collaborative systems.

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Format of the Experiment

https://qtrial2015az1.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3P210JLo9FoeHL7

Example of a fake test person, who is a man, 47 years, working as an architect, loves individual sports

Lieber Teilnehmer, liebe Teilnehmerin,

danke für dein Interesse an unserer Studie teilzunehmen! Mit der Beantwortung des nachstehenden Fragebogens trägst du zu der wissenschaftlichen Forschung der Fakultät für Psychologie an der Universität Wien bei. Die Erhebung wird im Rahmen unserer Diplomarbeit durchgeführt. Die Daten werden absolut vertraulich behandelt und werden nicht für kommerzielle Nutzung zur Verfügung gestellt. Es gibt im folgenden Fragebogen keine richtigen und falschen Antworten, wir bitten dich spontan und ehrlich zu antworten.

Die Bearbeitung des Fragebogens dauert ca. 10 Minuten.

Bei Fragen und Anregungen kannst du uns eine E-Mail schreiben (a0947159@unet.univie.ac.at; a0947395@unet.univie.ac.at)

Unter allen Teilnehmer/innen verlosen wir zwei Amazon-Gutscheine im Wert von je 25 Euro!


Danke für deine Unterstützung!

Janina Enachescu & Lara Wolter

Bitte wähle dein Geschlecht

Männlich

Weiblich

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Dein Alter  45

Was ist deine Beschäftigung

Student

Berufstätig

anderes

In welchem Bereich arbeitest du?

Land-, Forst- und Tierwirtschaft und Gartenbau

Rohstoffgewinnung, Produktion und Fertigung

Bau, Architektur, Vermessung und Gebäudetechnik

Naturwissenschaft, Geografie, Informatik und IT-Bereich

Verkehr, Logistik

Schutz und Sicherheit

Was ist dein Hobby? (Bitte wähle die Tätigkeit aus, die dir am wichtigsten ist)

Individual-Sport

Teamsport

Beobachtungen (Astrologie etc.)

Musik

Kulinarik

bildende Kunst

Weiterbildung

Outdoor Aktivitäten

Spiele

Literatur

Sammeln (Briefmarken etc.)

Reisen

Kaufmännische Dienstleistungen, Warenhandel, Vertrieb, Hotel und Tourismus

Unternehmensorganisation, Buchhaltung, Recht und Verwaltung

Gesundheit, Soziales, Lehre und Erziehung

Sprach-, Literatur, Geistes-, Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Medien, Kunst, Kultur und Gestaltung

Bist du in deiner Freizeit engagiert?

sozial
politisch
sozial und politisch
weder noch

Stell dir vor du möchtest für ein verlängertes Wochenende mit deinem/deiner besten/bestem Freund/in nach Paris verreisen. Dafür suchst du eine Ferienwohnung auf dem Online-Community-Marktplatz Airbnb. Auf Airbnb vermieten private Anbieter ihre Wohnungen an Feriengäste.

Du hast eine Suchanfrage für den betreffenden Zeitraum für Wohnungen im Zentrum in Paris, die zwischen 100 und 120 Euro die Nacht kosten gestartet.

Auf den nächsten Seiten findest du das Suchergebnis, der Airbnb Wohnungsangebote.

Gehe bei der Auswahl deiner Ferienwohnung davon aus, dass du über ausreichend viel Geld für die Reise verfügst.

Viel Spaß bei der Urlaubsplanung.

Bitte warte vor dem Weiterklicken immer, bis die Grafiken vollständig geladen sind.

Example one of 25 similar apartments

The screenshot shows an Airbnb listing for a Parisian apartment. At the top, there's a search bar with the text "Wohin soll's gehen?" and a button "Entdecke". Below this is a floor plan of the apartment. To the right of the floor plan, the price is listed as "112 € Pro Nacht". Below the price, there are fields for "Check-In", "Check-Out", and "Gäste" (2). A red button "Sofort buchen" is visible. Below the floor plan, there are icons for "Ganze Unterkunft", "2 Gäste", "1 Schlafzimmer", and "1 Bett". The title of the listing is "Schöner Pariser Altbau". Below the title, there's a section "Über dieses Inserat" with a description: "Diese schöne Altbauwohnung ist zentral gelegen. Einige der berühmten Pariser Sehenswürdigkeiten sind in wenigen Minuten zu Fuß erreichbar. Die Wohnung ist großzügig geschnitten und ca. 40 m² groß. Die helle offene Wohnküche ist mit einem gemütlichen Wohnraum verbunden. Das Schlafzimmer verfügt über ein Doppelbett." Below the description, there's a table with details about the accommodation:


Die Unterkunft	Art des Bettes: Richtiges Bett Art der Unterkunft: Wohnung Unterkunft für: 2 Schlafzimmer: 1	Badezimmer: 1 Betten: 1 Check-In: 13:00 Check-Out: 10:00
Ausstattung	Küche Internet TV	Wesentliches Heizung + Mehr

58 Bewertungen ★★★★★

Wie wahrscheinlich würdest du die angebotene Wohnung buchen?




Example dissimilar fake provider

 Hallo, ich bin Marie.

Ich studiere BWL.

Ich bin 27 Jahre alt.

In meiner Freizeit probiere ich gerne neue Backrezepte aus.

Ähnlichkeit 

[illegible]

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Wahrscheinlichkeit
in Prozent



Wahrscheinlichkeit in Prozent
10

[illegible]

[illegible]

Inwieweit treffen die folgenden Aussagen auf dich zu?

Ich...

	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu	Trifft eher nicht zu	Weder noch	Trifft eher zu	Trifft voll und ganz zu
... bin eher zurückhaltend, reserviert.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... schenke anderen leicht Vertrauen, glaube an das Gute im Menschen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... bin bequem, neige zur Faulheit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... bin entspannt, lasse mich durch Stress nicht aus der Ruhe bringen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... habe nur wenig künstlerisches Interesse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... gehe aus mir heraus, bin gesellig.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... neige dazu, andere zu kritisieren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... erledige Aufgaben gründlich.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... werde leicht nervös und unsicher.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... habe eine aktive Vorstellungskraft, bin phantasievoll.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Was glaubst du, worum es in dieser Studie geht?

Anmerkungen

Vielen Dank für die Teilnahme an unserer Studie!

Unter allen Teilnehmern verlosen wir zwei Amazon-Gutscheine im Wert von je 25 Euro.

Um an dem Gewinnspiel teilzunehmen klicke bitte auf folgenden Link:

https://qtrial2015az1.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bfNDHwJL2UaOaW1

Zusammenfassung

Auf peer-to-peer online Marktplätzen, können Nutzer gegenseitig Produkte untereinander austauschen. Eine dieser online Plattformen ist Airbnb, ein peer-to-peer Marktplatz, auf dem User anderen Usern ihre Zimmer, Wohnungen oder Häuser als Urlaubsunterkünfte gegen eine Buchungsgebühr zu Verfügung stellen (Guttenberg, 2013). Viele der Buchungs- und Kaufentscheidungen in der virtuellen oder realen Welt werden von Vertrauen beeinflusst (Kim & Park, 2012). Theoretisch eingebettet und unterstützt ist der Zusammenhang zwischen Vertrauen und der Kaufentscheidung durch die *Theorie des vernünftigen Handelns* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Diese besagt, dass subjektive Normen wie Vertrauen und Einstellungen gegenüber einer Handlung, zu Handlungsintentionen und letzten Endes zu einer bestimmten Handlung führen. Die Bildung von Vertrauen, kann neben individuellen Faktoren, auch von interpersonellen Faktoren beeinflusst werden. Basierend auf der vorherigen Studien, können Peer Empfehlungen und ähnliche soziodemographische Daten zwischen Anbieter und Nutzer die Produktentscheidung und Vertrauensbildung verstärken (Smith et al., 2005). Die Studie 'Trust between peers on peer-to-peer online platforms: The influence of interpersonal factors' kombiniert diese Annahmen und untersucht wie Ähnlichkeit zwischen potentielltem Mieter und Vermieter im online Kontext, sowie dritten Peer Empfehlungen, mit Vertrauen und Kaufbereitschaft zusammenhängen. Mit einem 2 x 3 Within- Subject Design, werden in einem online Experiment den Probanden sechs ähnliche Wohnungen mit sechs fiktiven Anbietern angeboten. Diese Anbieter sind basierend auf den soziodemografischen Daten der Teilnehmer, diesen ähnlich oder unähnlich. Zusätzlich wird nach jedem der sechs Anbieter, das Vertrauen in den Anbieter und die Wahrscheinlichkeit für eine Buchungintention des Apartments erhoben. Die Haupthypothesen werden anhand einer ANOVA, ANCOVA und multiplen linearen Regression geprüft. Nach der Hypothesen Testung wird kann angenommen werden, dass ein höheres Vertrauen zu einer höheren Buchungswahrscheinlichkeit führt ($\eta_p^2 = .340$). Weitere signifikanten Ergebnisse zeigen, dass seine höhere Ähnlichkeit mit einer Effektstärke von $\eta_p^2 = .044$, sowie eine bessere Empfehlung mit einer Effektstärke von $\eta_p^2 = .010$ zu einer höheren Wahrscheinlichkeit der Kaufintention führen. Es wird diskutiert inwiefern diese Ergebnisse einen Einfluss auf online Kaufsysteme wie Produkt Empfehlungen haben können.

Ich versichere, dass ich die Diplomarbeit ohne fremde Hilfe und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Quellen angefertigt habe.

Ich habe die Arbeit in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keiner Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt. Alle Ausführungen in der Arbeit, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß übernommen wurden, sind als solche gekennzeichnet.

Curriculum Vitae

Education:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Oct 2012 - present | University of Vienna (Vienna, Austria)
Psychology Studies, Diploma (Masters),
specialization in Economical and Clinical Psychology |
| Mar 2013 - June 2013 | University of Gothenburg (Gothenburg, Sweden)
Psychology Studies with focus on Educational and
Developmental Psychology |
| Oct 2009 - Oct 2012 | University of Vienna, (Vienna, Austria)
Studies of Psychology, Intermediate Diploma
(Bachelor) Grade: 1.9, excellent |
| Aug 1999 - July 2008 | Justus-Liebig-Schule, French Bilingual Secondary
School (Darmstadt, Germany)
Grade: 2.4, good (School Leaving Examination) |

Work Experience

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Oct 2013 - present | Recruiter EU / HR Generalist at Applause GmbH
(Berlin, Germany)
Recruiting, talent acquisition and staff development in
the IT, mobile and APP industry |
| Oct 2009 - present | Childcare (Vienna, Austria)
Focus to work with highly skilled children |

Internships

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| July 2014 – Sep 2014 | Counseling Internship at CSC Child Street-to-
School (Kathmandu, Nepal)
Clinical psychological internship with traumatized children
from underprivileged families |
| July 2011
Sep 2011 | Consulting Internship: ‘Rudolf Brozio: Beratung,
Training, Coaching’ (Frankfurt, Germany)
Training and coaching for team building and personal
and professional development |

Aug 2009 - Sep 2009	Human Resources Internship at LSG Sky Chefs, Lufthansa (Frankfurt, Germany) Focus on Management & Organizational Development
Mar 2009 - Aug 2009	Human Resources Internship at GVO Personal GmbH (Frankfurt, Germany) Recruiting staff for events and managing office work

Voluntary Experiences

July 2014 - present	Volunteer for CSC Child Street-to-School (Kathmandu, Nepal) Organizing different fundraising projects for street children in Nepal
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International Experiences

Aug 2011	BLS (Bordeaux, France) French Language School, Certification Level B2
Aug 2008 – Jan 2009	Work and Travel (Australia) Promotion for Photography Studios Seller in Toy Industry
Apr 2007 Mar 2003	School Exchanges in Melbourne (Australia) and Lyon (France) for bilingual language classes

Additional Skills and Interests

Languages	German: mother tongue English: fluent French: fluent
Computer Skills	MS-Office (Word, PP, Excel): Experienced user
Interests	Photography, Drawing, Dancing, Biking, Running, Traveling, Child Care